MAKING WAVES: ACADEMY ACTIVISTS AND THE MARITIME FRONTIER IN EARLY 19TH CENTURY FUJIAN AND TAIWAN

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Abstract

At the close of the 18th century, the maritime frontier on the Qing Empire's southeastern edge became an increasingly unruly place. Small-time pirates plundered coastal villages as huge corsair fleets thrashed the Qing navy. At the same time, communal strife in southern Fujian and Taiwan frustrated the Qing territorial administration, while droughts and other environmental disasters impoverished small-time cultivators and helped spark large-scale rebellions. By the dawn of the 19th century, the littoral world of Fujian and Taiwan had emerged as a site that required robust attention—and it was the academy activists of Fujian that tackled the urgent issues confronting its maritime frontier.

This dissertation explores activists of the Aofeng Academy and their roles in promoting solutions for problems afflicting the raucous maritime frontier of Fujian and Taiwan during the early 19th century. Founded in 1707, Aofeng occupied the center of Fujian's intellectual life and emphasized a rigorous Neo-Confucian education with a bent towards practical studies. During the prosperous eighteenth century, alumni of the Aofeng Academy had routinely served in powerful official positions, focusing on issues related to the empire writ large. However, by the end of the Qianlong reign (1735-1796), scholarly life at Aofeng increasingly addressed Fujian's local politics, particularly with regard to managing its troubled littoral regions.

Using archival sources, academy gazetteers, and the writings of Aofeng alumni, this study argues that the academy activists assumed a localist orientation through their efforts to improve coastal society and the security of the maritime frontier. As Aofeng alumni inserted themselves into local teaching posts, they served as local advocates, circulated information about the maritime frontier, and lobbied Qing officials to effect meaningful change. Staking out a legitimate voice in the local management of empire, the academy activists of Fujian accelerated a

fundamental empire-wide shift in favor of local power, and the diminishment of the imperial system.

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Contents

INTRODUCTION

Academy Activists and the Maritime Frontier

Early in the Jiaqing reign (1796-1820), Wu Yulin was exiled to Hunan. Wu was an instructor (*jiaoyu*), a very minor educational official in the vast Qing bureaucracy. His career as an instructor was productive: after earning his *juren* degree in 1777, Wu served seven successive stints as an instructor in various counties in his home province of Fujian and across the strait in the prefecture of Taiwan. Though regarded as ugly and hunchbacked (*maoqin qie tuo*) as a young man, he exhibited extraordinary energy and commitment to study, qualities that allowed him entry into Fujian's premier educational institution, the Aofeng Academy.

Driven by intense moral principles to serve locals in practical ways, Wu enthusiastically expanded the boundaries of his lowly bureaucratic teaching post by seeking to promote local benefit and dispel harmful practices (*xingli chubi wei jiren*). He was also an attentive observer of the local practices of his fellow Fujianese and wrote several collections of poetry based on his experiences working in different counties. At his final post in Fengshan County in southern Taiwan in 1799, he undertook several projects designed to promote local agriculture by revamping local waterworks, enlarging reservoir ponds, and facilitating irrigation.[1] Only a few years after the Lin Shuangwen Rebellion (1787-1788), which saw widespread violence and an invasion of the island by imperial troops, Wu may have believed that returning people to productive life would forestall any future outbreaks of violence. The local magistrate was another problem, however. Wu unsuccessfully accused the local magistrate of forty counts of corruption and tried to get higher officials in Taiwan to intervene. Rebuffed and angry, Wu refused to welcome the magistrate back at the county line, as was customary, and loudly cited

[1] Lin Qingzhang, *Qingling shiqi Taiwan ruxue cankao wenxian* (Xinbei: Huayi xueshu, 2013), 410.

passages from the text of educational administration (*Xuezheng quanshu*) to justify his actions. For his outspokenness and lack of respect for a superior, Wu was framed, and forced into exile in Hunan.[2]

At first glance, the saga of instructor Wu appears to be a story of an intensely energetic and idealistic man whose efforts and uncompromising principles eventually landed him in deep trouble. Just who did Wu think he was and what did he think he was doing? Why did he provoke powerful officials? Why did he believe he could influence them to intervene in sensitive political issues despite his relatively low position in the bureaucracy? Exploring his background, one discovers that Wu's efforts and idealism were not simply the products of a single individual's quixotic mind. Wu's affiliation with the sprawling network of the Aofeng Academy alumni helps explain his behavior and that of his colleagues across Fujian's maritime frontier.

Founded in 1707, the Aofeng Academy in Fuzhou connected Wu to some of the most influential individuals in Fujian: generations of its alumni served in the Qing empire's highest offices, assisted Qing emperors in crafting maritime and educational policies, and labored as educators and instructors across Fujian. Just as important, the Aofeng Academy imbued Wu and its alumni with an intensely muscular interpretation of Confucian learning which prioritized action and a commitment to finding practical solutions to problems. As the Qing empire entered the 19th century, the Aofeng Academy and its network of alumni increasingly oriented themselves to activism and action in order to address urgent problems afflicting Fujian and its maritime frontier.

[2] Zheng Zuqing, *Houguan xian xiangtu zhi* (Fuzhou: difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, 2001), 368.

From Qianlong to Jiaqing: The Qing in Flux

In recent years, Qing historians have expressed renewed interest in the early 19th century. As William T. Rowe has observed, historians have learned quite a lot about the "prosperous age" (*shengshi*) of the long 18th century and the self-strengthening reforms of the late 19th century.[3] In contrast, the early 19th century, spanning the reigns of the Jiaqing (r. 1796-1820) and Daoguang (r. 1820-1850) emperors, received scant scholarly attention, save for a very influential chapter by Susan Mann Jones and Philip A. Kuhn in *Cambridge History of China*, which argued that the Jiaqing period constituted the transitional moment for the Qing empire and modern China. Evidence of Qing decline was in abundance: the empire faced sharp administrative decay stemming from years of Heshen's mismanagement and corruption, a demographic crisis and increasing population pressure on the environment contributed to mass uprisings, most notably the White Lotus Rebellion (1796-1804). The Jiaqing emperor, though a capable and conscientious ruler, was unwilling or unable to fundamentally arrest imperial decay, setting the empire on a long, slow trajectory of decline.[4]

In the last decade or so, Qing historians have expanded upon Mann and Kuhn's pioneering work. This new scholarship has reassessed the causes of the Qing decline, the priorities of the Jiaqing court, and the creative energies of Qing literati who urgently addressed the empire's many problems. One of the most important revelations of this new scholarship identifies a comparatively liberalized political atmosphere of the Jiaqing court. In his book, *White Lotus Rebels and South China Pirates: Crisis and Reform in the Qing Empire*, Wensheng Wang argues that military crises in the empire's interior and coasts forced the Jiaqing emperor to

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[3] William T. Rowe, "The Significance of the Qianlong-Jiaqing Transition in Qing History," *Late Imperial China* (32.2) (December 2011): 74-88, 74.

[4] Susan Mann Jones and Philip A. Kuhn, "Dynastic Decline and the Roots of Rebellion," in *Cambridge History of China*, vol. 10, *Late Ch'ing, 1800-1911*, part 1, ed. John K. Fairbank (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 107-162.

stage a strategic political retreat from the interventionist ruling style of his father, the Qianlong emperor. At the same time, the Jiaqing emperor made significant changes at the court to counter administrative corruption and bloat, including bureaucratic standardization over the Grand Council and putting greater controls over the Imperial Household Department.[5] He thus presents the Jiaqing emperor as engaged in a deliberate effort to transform the Qing administrative apparatus by scaling it back and by increasing oversight in order to make it more politically sustainable over the longer term.

The Jiaqing emperor's efforts were not limited to administrative reform. Deeply concerned about multiplying crises, the emperor attempted to revitalize the floundering imperial project by soliciting advice from officials and literati through opening the "pathways of words" (*yanlu*).[6] Though the emperor got an unwelcome earful from various corners, and punished some officials—most notably Hong Liangji (1746-1809)—for their outspokenness in criticizing the emperor himself, the emperor's willingness to empower Han elites as part of his reform agenda helped spur the literati to tackle emerging challenges, and commit to the study and practice of statecraft to revitalize the empire's fortunes.

The early 19th century, therefore, is now understood as a heady period of literati statecraft (*jingshi*), characterized by the rise of several individuals who significantly impacted Qing official circles and thinking, particularly with regard to military and economic matters. Recently, scholars have sought to illuminate the political and intellectual trends of the early 19th century by examining the lives and works of these prominent individuals. These works include a study of Yan Ruyi (1759-1826) who conceived innovative "strategic hamlets" to combat White Lotus sectarians and developed new methods for borderland management as the state capacity of the

5 Wensheng Wang, *White Lotus Rebels and South China Pirates: Crisis and Reform in the Qing Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014).
6 William T. Rowe, *China's Last Empire: The Great Qing* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 154.

Qing weakened, particularly in its frontier areas.[7] More recently, William Rowe's book on Bao Shichen (1775-1855) examines his role as a consulting authority on fiscal matters, trade, and agricultural production, and popularizing the idea that supporting the individual pursuit of profit strengthened the fiscal health of the empire.[8]

Han literati increasingly dominated reformist intellectual space in the 19th century. Wei Yuan (1794-1857), another activist literatus of the early 19th century, collected the innovative ideas produced by his peers and predecessors, and published them in a massive compendium of statecraft, the *Da Qing jingshi wenbian* (Collected essays on statecraft in the Qing) for the purposes revitalizing the floundering empire. Wei and other activist literati involved themselves in the expansion and consolidation of new forms of knowledge, particularly geographic knowledge, which previously had been the jealously guarded purview of the Qing court. Once restrictions on geographic knowledge loosened during the Jiaqing period, these literati engaged with new geographical information and spatial terms, perceived a fundamental geopolitical shift stemming from the rise of British India, and instigated the transition from a "frontier policy to a foreign policy."[9] The creative energies of the Qing empire increasingly lay in the hands of activist Han literati, who depended less and less on the court and status as officials to make a meaningful impact on Qing politics, knowledge, and culture.

The more open atmosphere of the Jiaqing period not only allowed activist literati to make daring forays into reform, but also impacted local elites and their reorientation to local interests. Local elites increasingly assumed managerial positions once controlled by the state, such as tax

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7 Daniel McMahon, *Rethinking the Decline of China's Qing Dynasty: Imperial Activism and Borderland Management at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 2015), 105-131.
8 William T. Rowe, *Speaking of Profit: Bao Shichen and Reform in Nineteenth-Century China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018).
9 Matthew W. Mosca, *From Frontier Policy to Foreign Policy: The Question of India and the Transformation of Geopolitics in Qing China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013).

collection. A recent book by Seunghyun Han demonstrates that as the state withdrew, local elites took over former state functions, namely, the funding of infrastructure projects and philanthropic endeavors. Moreover, as state control over the enshrinement of local worthies and the publication of local literature relaxed, elites used these projects to celebrate themselves and their communities.[10] Han also finds that imperial discipline over local society was considerably relaxed in the Jiaqing period. Whereas the Qianlong emperor severely punished local literati who engaged in examination strikes and collective action, the Jiaqing emperor lessened punishments for such behavior; moreover, while his father winked at the flogging of literati by officials—a violation of Qing law—the Jiaqing emperor actively punished officials for beating literati.[11] Just as reform-minded literati depended less and less on the imperial court to be influential, so did local elites depend less and less on aligning their interests and cultural cachet with imperial interests to maintain local prominence.

The 19th Century Maritime Crisis

It was in this heady atmosphere of loosening state strictures, literati interest in statecraft, and renewed interest in the local that the Aofeng Academy and its network of alumni achieved newfound importance as authorities on the maritime frontier of Fujian and Taiwan. By the late Qianlong period, the maritime frontier on the Qing's southeastern edge had become an increasingly unruly place. The massive Lin Shuangwen Rebellion in Taiwan in 1787 gave way to an entrenched and long-lasting piracy crisis during the Jiaqing period when small-time buccaneers robbed sea-faring merchants and coastal villages and transnational corsair fleets

10 Seunghyun Han, *After the Prosperous Age: State and Elites in Early Nineteenth-Century Suzhou* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016).
11 Seunghyun Han, "The Punishment of Examination Riots in the Early to Mid-Qing Period," *Late Imperial China* 32.2 (December 2011): 133-165.

thrashed the Qing navy. At the same time, long-standing problems of communal feuding (*xiedou*) frustrated the Qing territorial administration, while droughts and other environmental disasters impoverished small-time cultivators and helped spark large-scale rebellions. By the close of the 18th century, the littoral world of Fujian and Taiwan had emerged as a site in desperate need of robust attention from the imperial center. Instead, it was the literati activists from the Aofeng Academy network who took the initiative to deal with challenges on the maritime frontier.

This dissertation explores academy activists and their roles in developing and promoting solutions for the raucous maritime frontier of Fujian and Taiwan during the early 19th century. It centers primarily on the heads, students, and alumni of the Aofeng Academy in Fuzhou. The Aofeng Academy was founded in 1707 and, as the province's most famous academy, it occupied the center of Fujian's intellectual life. The Aofeng Academy emphasized a rigorous Cheng-Zhu-style education with a bent towards *shixue* or "practical studies." During the "long eighteenth century," affiliates of the Aofeng Academy had routinely served in powerful official positions, focusing on issues related to the empire writ large. However, by the end of the Qianlong reign, scholarly life at Aofeng trended towards examining Fujian's internal politics, particularly with regard to managing its troubled littoral regions.

How did the shift to a local orientation and priorities occur? What institutional, intellectual, and political frameworks prompted this shift? How did an academy created for the purpose of cultivating elite Fujianese for official service increasingly concern itself with urgent security problems on its own doorstep? Through what means did its vast network of alumni tackle these and other long-standing provincial issues?

This study will first examine the Aofeng Academy and its philosophical orientation, which provided central institutional and intellectual frameworks for its localist and activist

transformation in the early 19th century. Founded in the Kangxi period as part of the Qing court's official embrace of Cheng-Zhu learning and *lixue*, the Aofeng Academy stringently maintained its philosophical stance throughout the 18th century, even as this way of thinking fell increasingly out of fashion, especially in contrast to the newer school of evidentiary studies (*kaoju*) coming out of the lower Yangzi region. Aofeng's commitment to *lixue* ideals, particularly learning through observation (*gewu*) and practical action, provided philosophical justification for charismatic Aofeng heads to refashion the academy to a local and activist orientation. At the same time, Aofeng's reorientation changed it into something beyond a mere academy and feeder into official positions. Its localist and activist reorientation also transformed the academy into something akin to a think tank in which Aofeng alumni conceived of and lobbied for practical solutions to maritime and local problems.

Beyond the academy itself, this study examines the academy activists and their effort to effect change on the Fujian-Taiwan maritime frontier. In particular, it identifies the adaptation and occupation of an imperial institution, a sub-bureaucratic official position called "instructor" (*jiaoyu* and *xundao*), as pivotal to the strategy of the Aofeng activist alumni. Low-ranking members of the Qing bureaucracy charged with directing education and examinations at the county level, instructors were not bound to the law of avoidance, the stipulation that prevented officials from serving in their home province to thwart the emergence of local power bases, and served throughout counties in their home province. Derided as "idle officials" (*xiancao*), with ample leisure time, these 19th century instructors, who were also activist academy alumni, increasingly used the post to advance goals beyond the intended scope of the position, through a process some modern-day political scientists refer to as "institutional amphibiousness."[12]

[12] X.L. Ding, "Institutional Amphibiousness and the Transition from Communism: The Case of China," *British Journal of Political Science*, 24.3 (July, 1994): 293-318.

Therefore, Aofeng Academy activist alumni who served as instructors, like Wu Yulin, used their positions to agitate for meaningful and practical solutions to local problems. Armed with Aofeng's orthodox and extremely muscular Cheng-Zhu scholarly orientation, and with a belief that as locals they knew how to solve Fujian's problems better than outsider officials, Aofeng Academy instructors also tackled the province's urgent maritime problems by publishing treatises, lobbying officials, and even impacting the policies of the Qing court by relying on the extended network of Aofeng alumni scattered in posts throughout Qing officialdom.

The central thrust of this study is that Aofeng Academy heads, students, and alumni fundamentally shifted to a localist orientation by pursuing local interests aimed at improving coastal society and the management of the maritime frontier. Although Aofeng had always maintained and celebrated its connections to the network of alumni at the central level, new graduates of the academy beginning in the early 19th century increasingly adopted an activist persona in order to achieve meaningful change at the local level, rather than strive solely to cultivate an illustrious official career. As the labor, knowledge, and service of Aofeng men increasingly served to address urgent local problems outside but parallel to official circles, these men carved out their own space in their corner of the empire and staked out—in their eyes— a legitimate voice on maritime and frontier policy and how things should be done on the local level. The dissertation's chronology begins with a burst of intellectual activism in Fujian during the Lin Shuangwen Rebellion (1787) in the late Qianlong era and extends to the beginning of the Xianfeng reign where an alliance of retired intellectual activists and Fujianese commanders put down the Small Sword Uprising of 1853. This project relies on a wide variety of source material, especially the writings of men associated with the Aofeng Academy, local gazetteers, academy

gazetteers, ritual texts, genealogies, biographies and tomb inscriptions, and archival material from the Qing central bureaucracy.

The Fujian Maritime Frontier

The "maritime frontier" as a concept in Chinese history, particularly in premodern Chinese history, might appear somewhat confusing to historians accustomed to studying China's borderlands. Over the last twenty years, studies of the frontier and borderlands in late imperial China have proliferated and have provided valuable insights into the nature of imperial expansion, state competition and diplomacy, the creation of geographic knowledge, and the classification of people. These studies have primarily focused on the Qing experience in the 18th century, covering the reigns of the Kangxi, Yongzheng, and Qianlong emperors, an extended period of territorial expansion, particularly into the northwestern regions later known as Xinjiang.[13] Studies have also examined the "internal frontiers" of the mountainous southwest in Guizhou, Sichuan, and Yunnan, and its gradual incorporation throughout the Ming and Qing.[14]

In contrast, China's maritime frontier has not received similarly detailed scholarly attention. There are a few reasons for this. These range from the entrenched, if misguided, idea that China, valuing settled agriculture, simply did not care about the sea where people made their living by fishing or trade. Nor did China feel threatened by the sea in the same way it felt threatened by the vast northern steppes and its fierce nomadic peoples. During the late imperial

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[13] Some representative works on the Qing northwestern frontier in recent years include, James A. Millward, *Beyond the Pass: Economy, Ethnicity, and Empire in Qing Central Asia 1759-1864* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998); Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); Johan Elverskog, *Our Great Qing: The Mongols, Buddhism, and the State in Late Imperial China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005).

[14] Some prominent works on the Qing southwestern frontier include, Leo K. Shin, *The Making of the Chinese State: Ethnicity and Expansion in the Ming Borderlands* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Charles Patterson Giersch, *Asian Borderlands: The Transformation of Qing China's Yunnan Frontier* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006); John E. Herman, *Amid the Clouds and Mist: China's Colonization of Guizhou* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007).

period, the maritime frontier did not noticeably expand the boundaries of the imperial state (with the notable exception of the settlement of the island of Taiwan), as did in the case of the northwest and southwest. After all, the provinces comprising the maritime frontier had been part of Chinese dynasties for hundreds of years, and developments along the coast took on the appearance of singular events rather than fundamental shifts, at least until the arrival of the European imperialists in the mid-19th century. Yet, the maritime frontier shared many similarities with China's northwestern and southwestern frontiers including a complex geographical and ethnic landscape, interstate competition, and shifting and ambiguous identities of those that lived there. The history and social dynamics of the maritime frontier in Fujian are essential to appreciating fundamental changes in the 19th century.

Geographically speaking, Fujian was a harsh world. The rugged landscape and population pressure squeezed Fujian's sparse arable land, making the province chronically vulnerable to rice shortages and famine. With a shortage of arable land, landless Fujianese turned to the sea to earn their livelihoods. The poor eked out a living in handicraft production, salt-making, and fishing, while others crewed long-range merchant ships plying the waters around the Philippines and Southeast Asia. Some overseas merchants became fabulously wealthy by running commercial empires with fleets of vessels that called at far-flung trading bases with the seasonal winds and the monsoon. The land squeeze was so intense and the draw of maritime-based livelihoods was so great that approximately one half of all Fujianese earned their livings away from home.[15]

Large corporate lineages (*zongzu*) dominated Fujian's social and economic world. Becoming especially prevalent in the coastal regions in the mid-16th century, the growth of

[15] Dian Murray, *The Origins of the Tiandihui*: *The Chinese Triads in Legend and History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 6.

lineages stemmed from an increasingly commercialized economy and broad trading networks. Fujian's lineages, the largest of which incorporated thousands of households, competed with each other in intense rivalries over access to coastal and overseas trade, and frequently waged bloody battles with each other to secure local dominance.[16] From the perspective of imperial administrators, Fujian's maritime economy, floating population, and lineage structure made the province especially challenging to govern. Officials appointed to the province quickly discovered that mountain ranges made access to the Fujian's interior extremely difficult while petty pirates plagued the coasts, particularly during Fujian's frequent famines. Occasionally, piracy posed a greater threat, such as during the Wakō crisis of the 1550s and 1560s in which Ming generals such as Ji Qiguang devised new tactical methods and military organization to fight highly mobile enemies.[17] More routinely, however, the larger lineages bullied smaller ones and warred with the others in armed affrays known as *xiedou*. The lineages of coastal Zhangzhou and Quanzhou prefectures in southern Fujian were especially notorious for engaging in violent affrays and intimidating imperial officials who tried to intervene. With its maritime-centered economy, complex social and physical geography, and endemic violence, Fujian earned a lasting reputation for heterodox practices and dysfunction.

Fujian's complex social structure and endemic problems were exacerbated during the turbulence of the dynastic transition. The Qing conquest and political consolidation of Fujian had taken several decades, and the process upended the province's social and economic life. After the capture of Beijing in 1644, loyalist Ming partisans faced off against the invading Qing forces in

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16 Harry J. Lamley, "Lineage Feuding in Southern Fujian and Eastern Guangdong under Qing Rule," *Violence in China: Essays in Culture and Counterculture*, eds., Jonathan N. Lipman and Stevan Harrell (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), 38-39.

17 Ray Huang, *1587, A Year of No Significance: The Ming Dynasty in Decline* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 166-171. During this period, Japanese and Chinese marauders attacked coastal China and besieged cities. Their fighting skills and nimble movements vexed Ming commanders assigned to smash them.

increasingly southern theaters while rival rump Ming regimes attempted to unify anti-Qing resistance. The Southern Ming courts of the Longwu Emperor (Zhu Yijian, r. 1645-1646) and later the Prince of Lu (Zhu Yihai, r. 1645-1655) were based in Fujian, providing a political and military focus to Ming restoration efforts. Aided by the Zheng family's commercial empire and naval forces, Fujian became contested land where Ming loyalists, Qing forces, and local opportunists clashed. Qing forces eventually executed the Longwu emperor in 1646 while the Prince of Lu died in 1655 on the island of Jinmen, finally shattering dreams of a Ming restoration in southeastern China.[18] The commercial proto-state established by Zheng Zhilong and his son, Zheng Chenggong, however, continued to harass the Qing from the coasts and represented a real military challenge to the Qing consolidation of southeastern China. Abandoning their stronghold in Xiamen (Amoy) off the coast of southern Fujian in the face of Qing pressure, Zheng Chenggong expelled the Dutch from Taiwan in 1661 and reestablished the Zheng regime on the island. Though Zheng Chenggong died shortly after his victory over the Dutch, his son, Zheng Jing, continued to consolidate his family's position on Taiwan, rebuilt the Zheng trading empire with connections to Japan and Southeast Asia, and made deft use of diplomatic overtures to the Dutch and Qing officials in order to ease military pressure on his island base.[19] Qing control over the coasts and the southeast were once again in jeopardy, particularly after Geng Jingzhong (d. 1682), the ruler of the Fujian feudatory, rebelled during the Rebellion of the Three Feudatories (1673-1681). The Qing's military response to these dire threats was accompanied by a draconian measure to starve the Zheng regime out of mainland resources by forcibly evacuating the littoral,

[18] For a narrative history of the Southern Ming regimes, see, Lynn Struve, *The Southern Ming, 1644-1662* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984).

[19] Xing Hang, *Conflict and Commerce in Maritime East Asia: The Zheng Family and the Shaping of the Modern World, c. 1620-1720* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 146-175. For a narrative history of the Zheng conquest of Dutch Taiwan, see Tonio Andrade, *Lost Colony: The Untold Story of China's First Great Victory over the West* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).

which decimated the livelihoods of coastal Fujianese. After the Qing quelled the feudatories' rebellion in 1681, it was able to turn its attention to eliminating the Zheng regime on Taiwan. Already weakened by defections of its military personnel to the Qing, the Zheng regime was finally eliminated by the Qing admiral Shi Lang, a former lieutenant of Zheng Chenggong, placing the island of Taiwan under Qing control in 1683.

The addition of Taiwan to the new and expanding Qing Empire profoundly affected Fujian's social and economic landscape. Administratively attached to Fujian as a prefecture (*Taiwanfu*), Taiwan began to be integrated into a new maritime trade network. The Qing court, no longer burdened by maritime adversaries with dynastic pretentions, gradually toned down military action and began to prioritize institutional reconstruction and economic development. The Kangxi court in 1684 lifted the ban on maritime trade, and pursued a new "Open Door Policy" that encouraged maritime trade in order to reset the southeastern economy and fill state coffers through the introduction of the customs office.[20] With imperial encouragement, commerce between the mainland and Taiwan led the island to develop a vibrant export economy based on rice and sugar. Agriculture on Taiwan's fertile western plains increasingly fed rice-starved Fujian, making the province dependent on Taiwan for its food security. The island of Xiamen in Fujian's south became southeastern China's entrepôt, which linked trade between Taiwan, the mainland and overseas markets.[21]

As Xiamen's merchants grew wealthy managing the "Amoy trade network," the Qing established its maritime customs office and based its navy there. One of the legacies of the Qing's decades-long conquest of the southeastern coast was the continuing presence of its

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[20] Gang Zhao, *The Qing Opening to the Ocean: Chinese Maritime Policies, 1684-1757* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2013), 87.

[21] Chin-Keong Ng, *Trade and Society: The Amoy Network on the China Coast, 1683-1735* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1983), 42.

massive military machine. Though the Qing encouraged maritime trade and agricultural exploitation of Taiwan, it remained highly sensitive to security threats. After the elimination of the Zheng regime, the Qing pressed the governor-general of Zhejiang and Fujian in Fuzhou in order to deal more efficiently with coastal defense; the Qing also maintained an expansive military institutional infrastructure featured two military intendants that outranked the provincial governor.[22] The Qing stationed the Fujian naval commander in Xiamen; typically a native Fujianese, he was tasked with responding to any coastal threat, overseeing the maritime customs house, and preserving an orderly trading environment.[23] At the same time, thousands of Green Standard troops were garrisoned throughout mainland Fujian and Taiwan, making Fujian home to the largest number of Green Standard soldiers of any province. Security of Taiwan remained a continuing problem for the Qing. The island not only provided Fujian with extra food security but also served as a "pressure valve" that could absorb the excess population in the land-starved province. As a result, thousands of migrants, particularly those from the southern Fujianese prefectures of Quanzhou and Zhangzhou and Chaozhou in eastern Guangdong, settled in Taiwan. The mostly male migrants frequently reproduced the "violent affrays" endemic to Fujian and eastern Guangdong, but instead of engaging in inter-lineage warfare, the clashes broke along sub-ethnic lines in which Quanzhou settlers battled those from Zhangzhou, Chaozhou, or the Hakka. Even more worrisome, large-scale rebellions would occasionally break out, while tension among Taiwanese aborigines and Han Chinese over land encroachment remained a permanent fixture of island society.[24] Without large lineage organizations to help stabilize Taiwanese

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[22] R. Kent Guy, *Qing Governors and Their Provinces: The Evolution of Territorial Administration in China, 1644-1796* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010), 269-270.
[23] Ng, 62.
[24] John Shepherd, *Statecraft and Political Economy on the Taiwan Frontier, 1600-1800* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), 310.

society, the Qing depended on its military institutions and Green Standard soldiery to maintain order.[25] As a result, the steep costs of administering and securing the island frontier made the Qing deeply ambivalent about expansion into new areas of Taiwan.

Historians like to point to the White Lotus Rebellion in the interior highlands as the defining event that marked the beginning of the decline of the Qing empire. Yet, the Lin Shuangwen Rebellion (1788), ironically one of the Qianlong emperor's "ten perfect victories," presaged the coastal turmoil of the first half of the nineteenth century. In contrast to glorious campaigns of expansion against foreign peoples, this "perfect victory" was a re-conquest of a previously pacified and settled territory waged against Qing subjects. From the perspective of those studying and teaching at the Aofeng Academy, the rebellion in Taiwan was the first indication that something was very wrong, not just in Fujian, but a more broad-based malady infecting the highest reaches of the Qing. There was more to follow. Beginning in 1790, massive pirate fleets invaded Qing territorial waters and raided the coasts from Guangdong to Zhejiang, thrashing the small and poorly equipped Qing navy. The Qing increasingly appeared to be unable to deal with crises nipping at its littoral.

As rebellions, pirates, and famines battered Fujian, it was the Aofeng Academy activists who took the initiative to rebuild stability and security along the maritime frontier. Their organization, philosophy, and exploits made them indispensable partners in governing the maritime frontier, and presaged fundamental shifts in the relationship between state and society in the later 19th century.

[25] Shepherd, 16.

Sources and Chapter Outline

This dissertation contains four chapters. Its major sources include the writings of Aofeng heads, alumni, and associates, academy gazetteers, and Qing archival materials, and other local sources.

Chapter One explores the founding, philosophy, students and leaders of the Aofeng Academy. Founded as part of the *lixue* movement of the early Qing, the academy's particular philosophy, intellectual lineage, and Fujian orientation helped transform it into a "think tank" to address urgent local and maritime problems emerging in the early 19th century.

Chapter Two examines the changing bureaucratic institution of county instructor (*jiaoyu* and *xundao*), a bureaucratic post frequently held by Aofeng alumni. Charged with managing county education and examinations, county instructors of the 19th century increasingly assumed roles as local advocates. As local Qing officials increasingly failed to deal with local crises, county instructors took the initiative in organizing local defense, proffering maritime strategies, and fighting official corruption.

Chapter Three examines the case of two county instructors and Aofeng alumni, Xie Jinluan and Zheng Jiancai, and their impact on the Taiwan maritime frontier and attempt to reform local society. Through publishing treatises and deft manipulation of the Aofeng Academy network, they were able to achieve the strategic goal of Qing expansion into new areas of Taiwan to combat the pirate menace. Posthumously enshrined as local worthies, they became new models of local political action in 19th century Fujian.

Chapter Four explores the reach of Aofeng's intellectual and political influence in 19th century Fujian through an exploration of Lin Shumei. Lin, born into a lowly naval family in Jinmen, transformed himself into a "local expert" through his adherence to Aofeng-sanctioned

literary forms and association with Aofeng associates. Lin's literary mastery and associations demonstrated a new pathway for local activists to achieve provincial influence.

CHAPTER ONE

Managing the Maritime Frontier:

The Aofeng Academy as Think Tank and Center for Regional Advocacy

In 1785, Zheng Guangce, an alumnus of the Aofeng Academy in Fuzhou, was invited to participate in special recruitment examinations (*zhaoshi*) held in conjunction with one of the Qianlong Emperor's Southern Tours. The emperor used the special recruitment examinations as a device to locate promising talents from the large pools of *jinshi* and *juren* degree holders in the provinces.[26] Zheng hoped that the exam would accelerate his career by providing a shorter path to an official appointment. Many years later Zheng's son-in-law, the eminent scholar-official and Aofeng alumnus, Liang Zhangju (1775-1849), wrote about Zheng's experience in a collection of miscellaneous jottings (*biji*).

According to Liang's account, Zheng proceeded to Hangzhou to sit for the examination held at the Fuwen Academy with other contenders from Fujian, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu. The chief examiner was none other than Heshen, the legendarily corrupt imperial favorite, who sat alone beneath the throne ready to accept the completed exams. Upon handing in their exams, the candidates were expected to genuflect to Heshen. Zheng was infuriated. When the time came for Zheng and the other Fujianese candidates to hand in their exams, they merely made a bow with their hands clasped in front of their chests as they withdrew. Heshen thereupon bound up the exams of the Fujianese examinees and did not read them, while the candidates from Jiangsu and Zhejiang looked on and laughed at their southern counterparts' lack of political awareness. Filled with shock and disgust, Zheng retreated to Fujian, effectively closing the door on any chance of an official career.[27]

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[26] Michael G. Chang, *A Court on Horseback: Imperial Touring and the Construction of Qing Rule, 1680-1785* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 262-265.

[27] Liang Zhangju, *Guitian suoji* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju chubanshe, 1981), 74.

After returning to Fuzhou, Zheng dedicated himself to the study of statecraft (*jingshi*). At the same time, he also sought out the headship of several Fujianese academies, including his alma mater, the Aofeng Academy. As the head, Zheng used his position to address urgent problems afflicting the maritime frontier in Fujian and Taiwan. At the same time, he reoriented his academy's curriculum from a focus on strict moral cultivation and *lixue* to a more expansive and explicit embrace of statecraft. As the 19th century dawned, Aofeng's new mantra was practical utility.

Although this incident may not have played out as Liang related it, writing as he did from the later Jiaqing period, the narrative, when read as a parable, is revealing. It dramatically illuminates disillusionment with the late Qianlong-era political and educational scene. It showcases ethically upright Fujianese scholars and sharply contrasts their behavior with that of scholars from the Jiangnan cultural core. It culminates with Zheng Guangce's dramatic reorientation away from officialdom and towards *jingshi*-style education and a newfound concern with addressing urgent local problems. At the same time, it reenacts a key trend of the Qianlong-Jiaqing transition: the reorientation of scholar elites away from the court, and toward the locale.

This chapter examines the evolution of the Aofeng Academy from its founding as an elite institution dedicated to the study and spread of Cheng-Zhu learning and *lixue* in the early Qing to a center for regional advocacy preoccupied with statecraft and local problems, particularly those concerning Fujian's maritime frontier, in the early 19th century. Like recent scholarship on late imperial academies, this chapter examines how an academy functioned in local life, and assesses how the individuals of this institution impacted shifting social, intellectual, and political

dynamics of the early 19th century.[28] In this chapter, I argue that the heads, students, and alumni of Aofeng transformed the academy into a center for regional advocacy, a "think tank" for issues vexing the Fujianese and Taiwanese maritime frontier in the 19th century. By aligning themselves with the orthodox intellectual life of the Qing court while simultaneously celebrating their Fujian roots through the creation of an intellectual and ritual lineage, Aofeng alumni were able to navigate both the local and central worlds, empowering them to participate in local politics and shape national policy.

The first section of this chapter examines the revival of *lixue* as a moral and ethical guiding light for Qing intellectuals in the 17th century. The second section further elaborates how these philosophical underpinnings were critical to the founding of the Aofeng Academy in Fujian by the *lixue* scholar and governor, Zhang Boxing. These underpinnings not only helped shape the views of successive leaders and students of the Academy, they were the basis for how the Academy expanded its influence across the region as a center of *lixue* learning and local political action. Finally, the third section of this chapter discusses the transformation of the Academy into an intellectual "think tank" capable of confronting local issues, particularly those affecting the maritime frontier.

Part I: A New Qing Evangelism: Lixue in the 17th century

The philosophical world of the early Qing was defined by a resurgence of Cheng-Zhu style *lixue*. The Song dynasty scholars, the Cheng brothers (Cheng Hao and Cheng Yi) and Zhu Xi, greatly influenced the trajectory of Neo-Confucian philosophy through the introduction of the "principle of heaven" (*tianli*, or simply, *li*). In their conception, principle (*li*) determined both

[28] See, Steven B. Miles, *The Sea of Learning: Mobility and Identity in Nineteenth-Century Guangzhou* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006); Daniel McMahon, "The Yuelu Academy and Hunan's Nineteenth-Century Turn Toward Statecraft," *Late Imperial China*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (June 2005): 72-109.

nature and moral principles; human beings, through the "investigation of things" (*gewu*) and by aligning themselves through the principles of the universe, could logically comprehend morality. Thus, knowledge of nature, morality, and human relations was understood to be a rational—and attainable—pursuit, which could be accomplished through diligent study. The backbone of this study was comprised of the Four Books identified by Zhu Xi—the *Analects*, the *Doctrine of the Mean*, the *Mencius*, and the *Great Learning*—and formed the basis of the civil service examinations in China until the end of the imperial period in 1911.[29] The collapse of the Ming dynasty in 1644, its dysfunctional politics, and increasingly fluid social milieu convinced many early Qing thinkers that the world had drifted too far from Cheng-Zhu orthodoxy, and required urgent renewal.

Lixue renewal in the early Qing hinged upon the energies of an impressive coterie of loosely connected scholars and officials haunted by the political dysfunction of the late Ming. For early Qing scholars, putting the nascent dynasty on an orthodox philosophical path defined by Neo-Confucian precepts constituted an essential—and urgent—moral mission. In order to accomplish this moral mission, Qing scholars preached a gospel of *lixue* and set about publishing and printing philosophical texts, converting the Qing court to their cause, and creating new academies to educate future generations of scholars.

The chaotic final years of the Ming dynasty and its fall in 1644 forced Chinese to come to terms with political catastrophe. An array of prominent Cheng-Zhu devotees, such as Lu Shiyi (1611-1672), Zhang Lüxiang (1611-1674) Yan Yuan (1635-1704), and Lu Longqi (1630-1693), wrestled with interpreting the collapse of the Ming and proffered theories about what went

[29] Wing-tsit, Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), 589-591.

wrong.[30] Two common points linked this cohort. The first was a rejection of the Ming-dynasty scholar-official (and Neo-Confucian philosopher), Wang Yangming and his "School of the Mind," which claimed that individuals could achieve sagehood through didactic appeals in the context of a personal relationship between teacher and student and through one's innate knowledge.[31] According to the early Qing cohort of Cheng-Zhu devotees, Wang's philosophy had dangerously deluded the masses and degraded proper social relations. At the same time, the rapid commercialization and urbanization of the sixteenth century and the gentry's simultaneous abandonment of its paternalistic roles sparked further anxiety over the social order. As a result, the early Qing witnessed the emergence of "ritualism" that sought to undergird orthodox social relations through the formal performance of rituals in local institutions like ancestral temples and lineage halls, linking the gentry to the Qing regime while also re-inscribing local hierarchies.[32] The second was an emphasis on the practical aspects of *lixue* and its application to real world problems while simultaneously downplaying its metaphysical aspects. As a result, the early Qing *lixue* enthusiasts were also students of political economy who sought to put the empire's economy back on track after the turmoil of the dynastic transition.[33]

As *lixue* advocates increasingly entered official circles in the early Qing, they became more influential in imperial affairs. The Kangxi emperor relied on two advisors and strong Cheng-Zhu advocates, Xiong Cili (1635-1709) and Li Guangdi (1642-1718), to help manage

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30 See, Wing-Tsit Chan, "The *Hsing-li ching-i* and the Ch'eng-Chu School of the Seventeenth Century," *The Unfolding of Neo*-Confucianism, ed. Wm. Theodore de Bary (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975), 549-552.

31 Wm. Theodore de Bary, "Individualism and Humanitarianism in Late Ming Thought," *Self and Society in Ming Thought*, ed. Wm. Theodore de Bary (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 162.

32 Kai-wing Chow, *The Rise of Confucian Ritualism in Late Imperial China: Ethics, Classics, and Lineage Discourse* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 227.

33 William T. Rowe, *Saving the World: Chen Hongmou and Elite Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 123.

both administrative matters and the imperial court's literary projects.[34] Significantly, Li compiled the *Xingli jingyi* in 1715, which was essentially an abridgement of an earlier anthology of Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucian thought for distribution to the empire's schools. By purging the older anthology of its metaphysical aspects and reordering its contents to showcase its "essential" points for maximal pedagogical value, Li's text reflected pragmatic strain of *lixue* thought rapidly becoming the early Qing's dominant intellectual trend.[35] As the Kangxi emperor gradually embraced *lixue* as orthodoxy in the latter part of his reign, the court elevated Zhu Xi as the philosophy's central figure. It marked Zhu's new status by installing his tablet in the Confucian Temple in Beijing in 1712 and published the *Zhuzi quanshu*, or the complete works of Zhu Xi.[36] Armed with imperial patronage, propagated by elite devotees, and implemented in local institutions like schools and lineage halls, *lixue* and emerged as the ethical and intellectual guiding light for the new Qing empire and Zhu Xi its patron saint.

Zhang Boxing and the Aofeng Academy

Like many of his learned contemporaries, Zhang Boxing (1652-1725), the governor of Fujian and founder of the Aofeng Academy, was an ardent follower of Zhu Xi and proselytizer of *lixue* thought. Over his lifetime, he established himself as a prolific scholar and editor of numerous Zhu Xi and *lixue*-inspired texts, compiling a series of 15 publications that included the sayings of Zhu Xi and the Cheng brothers, rules for learning, and the distinction between various regional schools of *lixue* thought in Fujian, Shaanxi, Hunan, and Henan. In addition, Zhang also labored to popularize the writings and thought of the early Qing *lixue* luminaries mentioned

[34] For an account of the political influence of Xiong and Li on the Kangxi emperor see, Gao Xiang, "Lun Qingqu lixue de zhengzhi yinxiang" (The political influence of early Qing *lixue* thought), *Qingshi yanjiu* 1993.3, 66-75.
[35] Chan, 567.
[36] Rowe, 113.

above, particularly those of Lu Shiyi—whose contributions to the *lixue* movement were generally unknown until Zhang's intervention.[37] His corpus of writings indicates that he was primarily preoccupied with collecting and transmitting the breadth of *lixue* thought from the Song founders through the new masters of the early Qing revival movement, creating an intellectual and philosophical lineage of sorts.

In his official and private life, Zhang enthusiastically founded or restored local and provincial educational institutions as a strategy to propagate *lixue* philosophy. Zhang believed that moral rectification of the scholarly class through education was fundamental to moral health of the empire because it set the requisite conditions for successful administration and proper social order. Thus, building and maintaining schools and cultivating local talent counted as essential duties of a Qing administrator.[38] Beginning in 1695, the death of his father compelled him to return to Henan for the requisite mourning period and afforded Zhang with the opportunity to begin implementing his *lixue* and educational goals locally. During the mourning period, he established community schools (*yixue*), and provided their students with modest stipends and appointed accomplished scholars as headmasters. His alma mater, the dilapidated Yinquan Academy, however, became his major project and set the pattern for his future academy ventures. Overhauling the structure completely, he refurbished the buildings and granted it land to rent to ensure a more stable financial future. Next, he invited local Henanese scholars to manage the academy and to teach a Cheng-Zhu curriculum. Renaming it the Qingjian Academy, Zhang lectured there for the duration of his formal mourning period.[39]

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37 Chan, 550.

38 Wang Weiping, "Zhang Boxing shuyuan jiaoyu shijian ji qi lixue sixiang de chuanbo," *Xuexi yu tansuo* 5.178 (2008): 219-223, 219.

39 Zhang Shihi, *Zhang Qingke gong nianpu* <https://archive.org/details/02084671.cn> Accessed 1/21/20.

When Zhang reentered official service, he continued his *lixue* evangelism in each of his posts by founding new academies. As the Jinan circuit intendant in Shandong in 1703, for instance, he established two new academies and renovated a third. He provided each academy with financial support in the form of dedicated lands, donated Zhu Xi and *lixue* texts, and recruited local teachers and academy heads with a solid scholarly background. Deeply involved in his academies' curriculum, finances, and choice of instructors, Zhang also ordered that Zhu Xi's *Bailudong shuyuan xuegui* (White Deer Grotto Academy Rules for Study) serve as each academy's pedagogical backbone.[40] Zhu's rules gave students a guide for understanding the classics and commentaries, a reading schedule, and a code of personal conduct to cultivate a receptive mind for study. Significantly, in addition to supplying students with an educational program and strict ideological orientation, the rules also embedded a practical outlook within its study program so that students would tackle real-world problems in their personal and official lives. In fact, the rules assumed there was no inherent separation between study and action. In this way, Zhang seeded the provinces in which he served with new academies in order both to expand and entrench *lixue* learning and to generate a new corps of practical problem-solvers.

Zhang took seriously Zhu Xi's injunction on the inseparability of learning and action in his own life and career. During the mourning period for his father, Zhang caught official notice for taking the lead in damming a dike break in his hometown of Yifeng in 1699 and for overseeing extensive repairs in the dike systems the following year.[41] Thus earning a reputation as an "expert" of river management, Zhang re-entered official life as a vigorous administrator with a particular penchant for tackling natural disasters and helping those affected by them, and for providing economic relief and assistance for small time cultivators. Zhang's interest in

[40] Ibid.

[41] Arthur W. Hummel, *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Print Office, 1943), 51.

economic matters closely mirrored the interests of other early Qing *lixue* thinkers whose study of political economy compelled them to restore the empire's economic health.[42] In fact, by the late 18th century when *lixue* fell out of fashion in scholarly circles, Zhang's reputation as a practical troubleshooter had eclipsed his scholarly contributions: only one of his works, a "useful" text on river conservancy was kept in the imperial manuscript library and acknowledged by the compilers of the *Siku quanshu* as worthy of preservation.

As he settled into his new post, Zhang took stock of the particular challenges he faced as the ranking official in a notoriously complex province. Like many writers, past and present, including native Fujianese, officials, and contemporary historians, Zhang understood that Fujian's mountainous topography and proximity to the ocean engendered a range of administrative challenges and shaped Fujianese social and economic life. Moreover, Zhang was aware that these endemic problems were compounded by the province's recent emergence from the turbulence of the dynastic transition.

When he arrived as the new governor in 1707, Zhang immediately confronted famine conditions in Fujian and Taiwan, a destructive typhoon, and a wave of small-scale piracy—issues common to the southeastern coastal regions.[43] As an experienced administrator, Zhang was committed to continuing Qing economic and institutional reconstruction efforts in Fujian.[44] He also had a more expansive vision for Fujian. He sought to integrate the province more firmly into the maturing Qing empire by linking it intellectually and spiritually into the Neo-Confucian movement.

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42 Rowe, *Saving the World,* 123.
43 Zhang Shishi, *Zhang Qingke gong nianpu*.
44 Guy, 270.

Zhang launched a program of cultural reform in accordance with orthodox norms. He attacked expressions of popular religion by destroying images of the gods of pestilence (Wushen) and transformed their temples into community schools (*yixue*) where students and teachers would sacrifice instead to Zhu Xi. In the same vein, he memorialized the court in 1709 recommending that Roman Catholic churches in Fujian and other provinces be transformed into community schools. Next, displeased over the large number of Buddhist nuns in Fuzhou, Zhang commanded that girls from poor families tonsured as nuns be redeemed by their families with the assistance of official funds.[45] By transforming temples and churches into schools and by reintegrating girls into the family, Zhang clearly intended to discipline local culture and commoners along Neo-Confucian lines. The centerpiece of Zhang's Neo-Confucian integration strategy, however, was the creation of a new academy.

Part II: The Aofeng Academy

As the governor and founder, Zhang exercised a great deal of control over the academy, its curriculum, and its rituals in order for it to accord with his vision of a robust *lixue* education. Zhang built his new academy at the foot of Jiuxian Mountain in an area known as Aofeng in the southeastern part of Fuzhou. Aofeng had been a local scenic spot that attracted sightseers since the Song dynasty, and its natural beauty had inspired locals to pen poetry extolling the site. The new Aofeng Academy ascended vertically up the hill, and its structures were gradually expanded over the years to include a pond, pavilions, library, lecture halls, shrines, grottos, student dormitories, and a garden with exotic plants.[46] With a meditative atmosphere and a suitable historical and literary legacy, the setting appeared to Zhang the ideal location for an academy

[45] Zhang Shihi, *Zhang Qingke gong nianpu*.
[46] You Guangyi, *Aofeng shuyuan zhi*, ed., Xu Weiqin (Fuzhou: Haifeng chubanshe, 2014), 17.

intended to promote *lixue* in Fujian. Through its promotion of Qing philosophical orthodoxy, the Aofeng Academy also became a cite for the celebration of Fujianese identity, scholarly virtuosity, and political action.

The Aofeng Academy Founding and Mission

Zhang's singular goal for his academy was the moral renewal of Fujian though transformation (*jiaohua*). In an implicit contrast to officials who viewed the province as morally wayward and prone to violence and heterodoxy, Zhang struck an optimistic tone in his record of the Aofeng Academy (*Aofeng shuyuan ji*). Flatly declaring that Fujian was "the land of Confucius and Mencius," Zhang insisted that the province embrace Song Neo-Confucians as ethical models as the Kangxi emperor had done. He also highlighted Zhu Xi's origins in Fujian. He imagined that Aofeng students would instruct their fellow provincials in a hierarchical exchange of moral discipline from scholar to commoner, thereby entrenching the academy's philosophical precepts at the grassroots level.[47] From the outset, Zhang provided Aofeng with a moral mission and expected its students to transform the province along Song Neo-Confucian precepts.

Zhang required students to follow a specific program of moral instruction. He imposed the same set of rules that he had applied in the academies he had built previously. Based on Zhu Xi's academy rules, the *Zhuzi bailudong jiaotiao*, and academy rules produced by *lixue* philosophers in the Song and Ming such as Hu Juren (1434-1484) and Lü Zuqian (1137-1181), and by Zhang himself, the Aofeng rules governed students' conduct, decorum, and attitudes

[47] You, 23-24.

towards study.[48] In studying, entering or leaving the academy, eating and drinking, dressing, or writing characters, Aofeng students were required to practice self-cultivation. Zhang anticipated that Aofeng students would build themselves into moral exemplars who would remake Fujian along orthodox *lixue* precepts in their post-Aofeng lives.

The Aofeng Directors

The duty of academy directors (*shanzhang*) was to manage the academy, instruct students, and set the scholastic tone. From the time of its founding until the end of the dynasty, the Aofeng Academy had thirty-three directors who served terms of different lengths. The directors nominally served at the pleasure of the Fujian civil authorities, and governors confirmed their positions, filled the post if vacant, or—rarely—removed a sitting director. The typical director at Aofeng was a *jinshi* degree holder and a retired Qing official. The vast majority of the directors were native Fujianese; only nine—less than one third—originated outside the province. The non-native Fujianese directors' tenures were concentrated in the earlier part of the 18th century; the last non Fujian-native to serve as the Aofeng director did so in the later Qianlong period. The directors from the late Qianlong period through the end of the dynasty were all native Fujianese. Many were, in fact, alumni of the Aofeng Academy. The composition of the directorate underscored the particular Fujianese flavor of the academy's philosophical stance (*Minxue*) and accentuated a sense of continuity that linked the Aofeng community to its Song and Ming forbears and to the province's history of scholarly accomplishments. At the same time, their professional backgrounds as former officials connected the academy to intellectual trends and elites beyond the province's borders and helped them reach into power circles in Beijing.

[48] You, 41-48.

Continuing in the same the philosophical vein as Zhang Boxing, the Aofeng directors linked the academy to the 18th century Neo-Confucian revival. Appointed by governor Zhang Boxing, Cai Bi, a man of 60 sui from Zhangpu County in southern Fujian served as Aofeng's first director. Not coincidentally, he came from a lineage with a long and impressive *lixue* pedigree. One of his ancestors, Cai Yuanding (dates unknown), had been a famous scholar in the early Song who posthumously earned plaudits from Zhu Xi for his broad learning and teaching. More recently, Cai's own father had been a disciple of Huang Daozhou, a scholar official famous for his *lixue* scholarship, moral rigor, and loyalist martyrdom after the fall of the Ming. As a talented young scholar and a devotee of Cheng-Zhu scholarship, Cai Bi was selected as a tribute student, and spent five years in Beijing in the Imperial College (*Taixue*). Declining official posts, he returned to Fujian to pursue a life of teaching. Later on, while serving as the instructor (*jiaoyu*) of Luoyuan County, Zhang Boxing invited him to teach at Aofeng as its founding director. He was accompanied by his son, Shiyuan, who assisted with printing essential texts at the academy.[49] Cai's presence at Aofeng imbued the new academy with the bona fides of a distinguished and scholarly lineage, whose affiliation to Fujianese strand of *lixue* learning and national affiliation was carried on by his son, Shiyuan, and the eminent official, Li Guangdi.

Li Guangdi noticed Shiyuan during his stint as a Hanlin compiler and a newly minted *jinshi* degree holder (1717). Familiar with his father and excited about the new Aofeng Academy, Li recruited the younger Cai—a Song-learning enthusiast—as an editor to produce the *Xingli jingyi*, the foundational text of Qing Neo-Confucian thought stripped of metaphysical content. After Cai Bi passed away, Li Guangdi lobbied the Fujian governor to name Cai Shiyuan the next Aofeng director. Li's letter to the governor described the wayward state of the Fujianese literati

[49] Zhang Boxing, *Zhengyitang wenji fu xuji* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985), 152.

and the miserable state of its popular customs. He perceived the Aofeng Academy to be an essential vehicle for moral and practical renewal in Fujian, and argued that his disciple, Cai Shiyuan, should train the new generation of moral reformers along robust *lixue* principles. Significantly, Li referenced the relationship between imperial officials and academy directors during the Song and Yuan periods. He made the claim that historically, officials and directors had cooperated in an atmosphere of mutual support and respect in order to effect changes on the ground.[50] In his letter, Li imagined a similarly cooperative relationship between Qing officials and academy directors.

Though not enshrined at Aofeng, Li Guangdi was regarded by future generations of Aofeng leaders and students as something of a founding inspiration. After Cai Shiyuan assumed the post of Aofeng director, Li took a leave of absence to visit his home in Anxi County. When he arrived in Fuzhou, he declined invitations by the governor and governor-general to present a talk in favor of delivering a series of lectures at the Aofeng Academy at Cai's request. At Aofeng, Li touched on the just completed *Xingli jingyi*, addressing the nature of *xingli* and again criticizing the philosophy of Wang Yangming. He also summarized the commentary of several Song and Ming *lixue* scholars to clarify Cheng-Zhu philosophy's relationship between knowledge and action. The lecture then transformed into a seminar of sorts; Cai invited the Aofeng students to pepper his mentor with difficult questions.[51] Li's lectures at Aofeng underscored the early Qing rejection of scholarship for its own sake in favor of employing study as a vehicle to achieve practical change and bring about moral transformation.

In his stewardship of Aofeng, Cai Shiyuan echoed precisely the same themes as Li Guangdi had presented in his talks. While Cai labored to promote a muscular *lixue* philosophy at

[50] You, 152-153.
[51] You, 154-155.

Aofeng to stimulate provincial renewal, he maintained a strong affiliation with the leading champions of Cheng-Zhu studies on the national level. After his tenure at Aofeng, Cai returned to official service in Beijing as one of the Qianlong emperor's tutors. While working at the imperial court, he also collaborated with scholarly luminaries like Zhu Shi and Fang Bao (1668-1749) who labored to strengthen the Qing court's support for Cheng-Zhu studies and its representation in the imperial examinations.[52] For the early Aofeng leaders like Li Guangdi, Zhang Boxing, and the Cais, connecting the academy to national intellectual trends elevated the academy to the forefront of Qing Neo-Confucianism movement.

The Aofeng directors maintained the academy's adherence to *lixue* philosophy and Cheng-Zhu studies, even as those traditions became unfashionable relative to new modes of evidentiary scholarship (*kaoju*) emanating from Jiangnan. Throughout the 18th and early 19th centuries, Aofeng was headed by a series of charismatic directors with a strong commitment to Cheng-Zhu studies and *lixue* philosophy and a concomitant driving sense of moral mission. Even though the academy's philosophical stance was increasingly eclipsed by cutting edge evidentiary studies, Aofeng students still managed to hold their own on the national stage, winning *jinshi* degrees and entering official service at all levels.

Rates of success in the examinations may also have been influenced by another early 18th century Aofeng director, Zhu Shixiu, and his monthly testing of Aofeng students' abilities in *guwen* (ancient-style) writing. Originally a style of writing favored by the likes of Ouyang Xiu and Wang Anshi in the Song dynasty, 18th century scholar-officials, such as Fang Bao and Yao Nai, in an attempt to blunt the increasing dominance of Han learning, argued before the Qianlong

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[52] Kai-wing Chow, "Discourse, Examination, and Local Elite: The Invention of the T'ung-ch'eng School in Ch'ing China," *Education and Society in Late Imperial China, 1600-1900,* eds., Benjamin A. Elman and Alexander Woodside (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994):183-219, 193.

emperor that this *guwen* as manifested by the eight-legged essays in the civil examinations was deeply linked to the imperially-sanctioned Song learning.[53] *Guwen* therefore featured as a major aspect of education at Aofeng. Liang Zhangju (1775-1849), an Aofeng alumni and eminent official active in the early 19th century, defended the use of *guwen* and the eight-legged essay. In a text titled, *Zhiyi zonghua* (Collected comments on the crafting of eight-legged civil examination essays), Zhang extolled the aesthetic contribution of the *guwen*-inspired eight-legged essays, and alleged there was no other viable alternative.[54] By the time of its printing in 1806, the Aofeng Academy gazetteer listed 154 *jinshi* degree winners, and added another 95 names by the time of its reprinting in 1838.[55] Additionally, Aofeng boasted many more *juren* degree winners who were scattered throughout Fujian and embedded in low-level educational posts (*jiaoyu* and *xundao*). The section of the Aofeng Academy gazetteer that details the examination success of its alumni assumes an almost apologetic tone, implying that Aofeng virtuosity in the civil examination contradicts its stated mission of spreading Cheng-Zhu gospel, yet admitting that competing in the civil examinations was an inevitable, if unfortunate, aspect of academy life.[56] Whether or not this tone was genuine, as a result of their examination success at the provincial and national levels, Aofeng alumni were dispersed throughout the Qing empire in a network that extended from sub-bureaucratic educational posts in Fujianese counties to high ranking positions in the capital.

The Aofeng Academy incorporated teachings and texts grounded in evidentiary learning by the Daoguang period (1820-1850), thanks to the efforts of a new director, Chen Shouqi (1771-1834). Chen, the son of an instructor of various Fujian academies, became known as a

53 Benjamin A. Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 382.
54 Elman, 383-384.
55 You, 94-101; Lai Xifan, *Aofeng shuyuan jilue*, ed., Xu Weiqin (Fuzhou: Haifeng chubanshe, 2014), 278-284.
56 You, 60.

talented scholar in his youth. His scholastic talent allowed him to enter the Aofeng Academy where he studied *lixue* under the director, Meng Chaoran, himself a former Aofeng student and a charismatic authority on Cheng-Zhu studies. After completing his studies at Aofeng, Chen attained his *jinshi* in 1799 and entered the Hanlin academy in Beijing. One of his examiners was the eminent official and *kaozheng* scholar, Ruan Yuan (1764-1849). Impressed with Chen, Ruan treated him as a disciple, and actively patronized Chen's career. When Ruan assumed the Zhejiang governorship, he employed Chen as an instructor in Hangzhou's Fuwen Academy while simultaneously inviting him to teach at the Gujing jingshe (Retreat for Glossing the Classics), an academy built by Ruan with the explicit purpose of training students in Han learning.[57] Subsequently, Chen served in various provincial educational administrative posts before returning to Fujian as the director of the Qingyuan Academy in Quanzhou and finally the Aofeng Academy in the early Daoguang period.

During his tenure at Aofeng, Chen introduced students to *kaozheng* learning and its methodologies, but Chen would not have regarded himself as a Han learning purist. Rather, Chen was concerned with combining the intellectual rigor of *kaozheng* studies with the moral imperatives of Cheng-Zhu studies to address urgent problems emerging across the Qing Empire. In that regard, he might be considered a syncretist of Song and Han learning, echoing some literati of the early nineteenth century, including another influential Aofeng alumnus, Chen Genghuan (1757-1820). In fact, years earlier during his stint as an examiner for the 1807 Henan provincial examination, Chen wrote a report in which he claimed that Song and Han learning *both* constituted the philosophical underpinnings of governance.[58] Though enamored with *kaozheng* methodologies, Chen remained a deep admirer of Li Guangdi, Cai Shiyuan, and other

[57] Stephen B. Miles, *The Sea of Learning: Mobility and Identity in Nineteenth-Century Guangzhou* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 8, 92.
[58] Elman, 571.

Song learning adherents and their moral commitment to *shixue*, or substantive studies.[59] He was particularly concerned with the unity of righteousness (*yi*) and benefit (*li*). Troubled that the current age was defined by the pursuit of benefit without a concomitant commitment to righteousness and propriety, Chen sought to rebalance the equation by arguing that *yi* and *li* were self-constituting—a view that would sound familiar to other Song learning adherents.[60] At the same time, Chen was becoming increasingly concerned that the Qing Empire was unable to develop new talent that could address emerging challenges of the Jiaqing and Daoguang eras. The main culprit, in Chen's view, was the civil examination's lack of practical content. In an essay, Chen cited Zhu Xi and Ming thinker Gui Youguang (1506-1571) to argue that pursuit of literary virtuosity at the expense of meaningful and practical knowledge merely fulfilled the career goals of ambitious men, and resulted in great harm to the country.[61] Chen Shouqi was clearly troubled by what he perceived to be moribund institutions and their ability to produce new talent in order to tackle new governing challenges in creative ways. His effort to introduce *kaozheng* studies at Aofeng was an attempt to superimpose a rigorous methodology over the academy's long tradition of moral learning (*lixue*) and emphasis on practical studies (*shixue*). Chen understood that a familiarity with *kaozheng* studies allowed Aofeng alumni to engage with scholars from outside Fujian, and ally with them as statecraft-minded officials to address the empire's challenges as he had done with Ruan Yuan. Chen's syncretic vision for Aofeng reflected an increased sense of urgency among educated elites towards Qing institutions, and signaled an attempt to draw upon various schools of thought in order to create new model thinkers to address the empire's regional and national problems.

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[59] Chen Shouqi, "Yu Ye Jianan xunfu shu," *Zuohai wenji*, in *Xuxiu siku quanshu*, Vol. 1496 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2002) 209a-212a.
[60] You, 180-182.
[61] Elman, 572; You, 182-184.

Aofeng Students and Financial Support

In addition to the intellectual influence of the Academy's directors on the Fujian region, the academy attracted the most promising scholars from the entire province and exerted a broader reach than was typical for most academies. Most academies in Fujian and across the empire—both private and official—served students either within a single county, or if an institution had more economic resources, a prefecture. Over the Qing period, approximately 470 academies were founded in Fujian; only five of these, including Aofeng, matriculated students from the entire province.

In order to sustain students from beyond the immediate vicinity of Fuzhou, Aofeng provided them with a stipend, room and board, clothing, and travel expenses. Student stipends, however, were contingent on performance. Students were tested three times a month. Those that performed well received small monetary rewards, while those that failed to meet expectations had their stipends cut. Students who continued to exhibit poor performance were expelled from the academy.[62] As a result, student life at Aofeng was highly competitive in nature.

Providing for students' expenses, salaries for teachers and academy heads, ritual celebrations, and physical maintenance was expensive. Zhang Boxing therefore endowed Aofeng with land on the lower reaches of the Min River outside of Fuzhou in order to support the academy through funds accrued through rent, a strategy similar to other communal organizations such as temples, lineage shrines, and community schools. Over time, Aofeng's rental lands increased through purchase and donation, and the grain generated from these lands totaled more than 15,000 catties a year.[63] Other than funds generated by its endowed land, Aofeng regularly received monetary donations from official patrons and occasionally from the imperial court. In

[62] You, 50.
[63] You, 229.

1733, the Yongzheng emperor donated 1000 taels to the academy; five years later in 1738 the Qianlong emperor presented the academy with another 1000 taels.

Apart from monetary gifts, the emperors of the high Qing also signaled their approval of the Aofeng academy through symbolic marks of distinction. Soon after the academy's founding, the Kangxi emperor gifted the academy with a scroll of his calligraphy in 1711 and presented the academy with a gift of three texts on calligraphy in 1716. Years later, the Qianlong emperor followed suit with his own gift of a text and scroll of his own calligraphy as a mark of imperial favor.[64]

The relative wealth of Aofeng contrasted with the more typically precarious financial circumstances of other late imperial academies. Aofeng heads, Qing officials serving in Fujian, and other patrons appeared to understand that the financial support of students at the province's most esteemed academy was something to be carefully maintained. With such patronage and financial support, Aofeng students understood that they were the scholarly cream of the province, and enjoyed a coveted academic status, and a special destiny as future Qing officials and in the maintenance of Fujian's scholarly traditions.

Aofeng Academy Library and the Distribution of Lixue Texts

Aofeng scholars' access to one of coastal China's most impressive libraries served as a further means by which Aofeng could disseminate information and in particular, lixue texts throughout the region. Initially seeded by a donation of books by Zhang Boxing, the library's collection steadily grew through book purchases, donations by supportive officials and private individuals, and even gifts from the imperial court., eventually reaching more than one thousand

[64] You, 14.

titles by the early Jiaqing period. Although the Aofeng collection possessed a rich assortment of texts on *lixue* philosophy, the collection included generous offerings in the classics, histories, geography, commentaries, literary collections, as well as books on art, calligraphy, agriculture, medicine, law and novels. Strict rules governed the use of the collection and maintained its integrity; students who damaged or lost books were fined to cover the cost of their replacement.[65] The library and its extensive collections sealed Aofeng's reputation as the most significant academy in Fujian, and provided ample resources for students to maintain their scholarly dominance in the province.

Aofeng not only possessed one of the most significant libraries in southern China, but it also sponsored reprints of important and rare *lixue* texts, helping spread the gospel of *lixue* throughout Fujian. As the clout of the academy among official and private circles expanded the library's collections over time, some officials worried that the concentration of texts in Aofeng impeded efforts by other academies in Fujian to develop their own textual collections.

Chen Hongmou, a statecraft-oriented official and a Cheng-Zhu devotee, was a great admirer of Zhang Boxing and the mission of the Aofeng Academy to reform Fujian through cultivating generations of students steeped in *lixue* learning. When serving as the governor of Fujian in the 1750s, Chen patronized the academy by donating 170 titles on *lixue* philosophy and *guanxue* learning with the order that the Aofeng students use the texts in order to devise agricultural improvements for the province.[66] At the same time, Chen conducted an audit of the library's inventory and discovered that it possessed duplicate copies of texts acquired from well-meaning donors. After his discovery of the extra texts, Chen ordered that Aofeng reprint its essential texts and have them distributed to other schools and academies in Fujian in order to

[65] You, 102-103.
[66] Rowe, 115, 132.

more reach more students in other parts of the province—a key theme of Chen's approach to administration and education.[67] Therefore, Aofeng's library and its print projects help seed literary collections in other provincial academies, further spreading and entrenching the gospel of *lixue* across Fujian.

Aofeng Shrines: The Creation of an Intellectual and Ritual Lineage

A program of rites honoring selected worthies further undergirded and articulated the academy's intellectual commitments. Ritual worship at the Aofeng Academy constituted an essential component of academy life. According to the academy's rules, the Aofeng director (*shanzhang*) would lead students to each of several shrines to burn incense at the beginning of each month. In each spring and autumn, the director, students, and teachers would carry out a much bigger ceremony involving incense, ritual music, and the consumption of sacramental foods in order to celebrate those enshrined.[68] The choice of which worthies to honor in the academy's shrines made a strong statement about its philosophical orientation and local roots and also had implications for its program of scholarship and moral-political action. More importantly, the tiered Aofeng shrines effectively created a spiritual and intellectual lineage for the academy, and the Aofeng students constituted its descendants and worthy heirs.

The shrines at Aofeng consisted of three hierarchical tiers. The first tier belonged to the core cohort of Song Neo-Confucians and the progenitors of regional *lixue* schools, namely Zhou Dunyi (1017-1073), Zhang Zai (1020-1070), the two Cheng brothers, Cheng Hao (1032-1085) and Cheng Yi (1033-1107), and Zhu Xi (1130-1200). Of these five core philosophers, Zhu Xi was indisputably the patron saint of Aofeng. As the most prominent *lixue* philosopher and a

[67] Chen Hongmou, "Chi fa shuji xi, Qianlong shijiu nian san yue," *Peiyuan tang oucungao* (Vol 34), 30-39; Chen Hongmou, "Chi fa shuji xi, Qianlong shijiu nian si yue," *Peiyuan tang oucungao* (Vol 34), 47-50
[68] You, 49.

Fujian native and thus the progenitor of *Minxue* ("Fujian learning"), Zhu Xi occupied Aofeng's central ritual space. Rites honoring Zhu Xi connected Aofeng students to the ongoing transregional Neo-Confucian revival movement, while students, by labeling their practice *Minxue* ("Min Studies"; Min is an archaic name for Fujian province), celebrated local Fujianese identity.

Zhang Boxing and early associates of the Aofeng Academy next searched the Song History (*Songshi*), Ming History (*Mingshi*), the Fujian provincial gazetteer, and the *Daonan yuanwei*, a collection of biographies of prominent Confucians, and selected twenty-three Fujianese *lixue* adherents to receive ritual worship at Aofeng for the academy's second tier of shrines.[69] Spanning the Northern Song through the Ming dynasties, the individuals of the second tier celebrated Fujian's achievements in *lixue* studies, amplified Zhu Xi's prominence, and frequently modeled virtuous action and integrity under severe duress. Several of the enshrined individuals were Fujianese disciples of Zhu Xi and the Cheng brothers.

Many of those in the second tier served as high officials during the late Northern Song dynasty, grappled with the collapse of the Song court and the Jurchen Jin invasion, and transmitted Neo-Confucian thought in the new Southern Song regime. Chief among this group were individuals like Li Gang (1083-1140), Yang Shi (1053-1135), You Zuo (1053-1123), and Hu Anguo (1074-1138). At the close of the Northern Song dynasty, individuals in this group advocated a vigorous military response to the invading Jin and continued to maintain a hawkish anti-Jin stance during the early years of the Southern Song. Prominent among this group, Li Gang, in addition to his capacity as a high official, was also a general who directed the military during the Jin siege of Kaifeng, shepherded the "mobile court" of the Southern Song emperor,

[69] You, 31.

and managed the new Song defenses below the Yangzi River.[70] Intellectually—and politically—this group opposed the New Policies (*Xinfa*) of the scholar-statesman, Wang Anshi (1021-1086) and his later partisans, like Cai Jing (1047-1126). Because the controversial New Policies had been ascendant during the Huizong reign, conservatives blamed the fall of the Northern Song on Wang and the influence of his reforms. In response, Southern Song Neo-Confucians and anti-Wang scholars produced new interpretations of the *Zhouli* (Rites of Zhou), the text on which Wang based his New Policies, in order to reclaim the text and undermine the foundation for his political and social programs.[71] Emblematic of this intellectual trend, Yang Shi, an ally of Li Gang, used his post as chancellor of the National University to attack Wang and New Policy officials. Credited with transmitting Neo-Confucianism to south China, Yang wrote treatises attacking the New Policies and his disciples authored new interpretations of the *Zhouli* in order to reinstate conservative policies in the nascent Southern Song dynasty.[72]

The anti-Wang Anshi stance articulated by many of the Song scholars enshrined at Aofeng suggested a tacit support for Wang's archrival, Sima Guang. In contrast to Wang's conceptualization of an activist government using its power to increase state wealth and social equality, Sima advocated for a far more limited governmental role in the maintenance of local society. Sima argued that the government had no meaningful role in encouraging the production of wealth, nor should it seek to produce a more equal society and break down social distinctions. Instead, local elites should use their position and influence to maintain the social order and

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[70] For a narrative of Li Gang's activities during the late Northern Song and early Southern Song periods, see, Patricia Ebrey, *Emperor Huizong* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), 399, 434-445; Shin-yi Chao, "Huizong and the Divine Empyrean Palace Temple Network," *Emperor Huizong and Late Northern Song China: The Politics of Culture and the Culture of Politics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 355; John W. Chaffee, *Branches of Heaven: A History of the Imperial Clan of Sung China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 113-114; Jaeyoon Song, *Traces of Grand Peace: Classics and State Activism in Imperial China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), 320-325; Frederick W. Mote, *Imperial China: 900-1800* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 292-293.

[71] Song, 340.

[72] Song, 320-322.

encourage productive work among all classes. Other Qing dynasty adherents of Song studies and Cheng-Zhu philosophy had a similarly dim view of Wang Anshi and his activist New Policies. Notably, Chen Hongmou embraced Sima's "conservative" social and political stance, yet he was far more sanguine about the role of state to produce to make a positive impact on the economy, production, education, than Sima would likely have condoned; however, Chen identified deeply with the Song thinker's emphasis on moral self-cultivation and "humanistic approach to the tasks of governance."[73] For early Qing officials and thinkers, identification with Sima Guang certainly did not preclude the use of state power to achieve economic and social goals, but a purely technocratic interpretation of governance was to be eschewed. Good governance—and use of state power to influence the economy and society—demanded a commitment to moral self-cultivation.

The anti-Jin stance of the men enshrined at Aofeng was potentially subversive. Their embrace of Neo-Confucianism and their achievements in transmitting the philosophy in the Southern Song was matched by their militant opposition to the Jurchen Jin, from whom the Manchus claimed direct decent. The question of the Qing rulers' status as an alien people and their claims of political legitimacy to rule China remained a highly sensitive question well into the 18th century. Song criticism of the Jin could easily be interpreted as a veiled attack on the Qing. Hu Anguo, an opponent of Wang Anshi's reforms and a transmitter of the Neo-Confucian way in the Southern Song, and his sons Yin and Hong (all of whom were enshrined in Aofeng) studied the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and devised principles in order to evaluate historical events published in their *Hushi chunqiu zhuan* (Mr. Hu's Spring and Autumn Annals), a text that

[73] Rowe,118-122.

highly influenced Zhu Xi's guide to organize historical facts to render ethical judgments.[74] At the same time, the elder Hu and his sons wrote trenchant attacks on the Jin using highly charged, racialized terms. Denunciation of the Jin in the 12th century could be employed as criticism of the Qing in the 17th and 18th centuries—and it was. In one example, Wang Fuzhi (1619-1691), a 17th century Ming loyalist scholar from Hunan, studied the vision of history as laid out in the *Hushi chunqiu zhuan* and cited Hu Anguo's *Zhuo rangyi zun Zhou zhi dayi* (On the principles of expelling the barbarians and venerating the Zhou) in his own anti-Manchu texts.[75] Certainly, the anti-Jurchen position of some of the enshrined men and their texts could have been used by anti-Qing partisans to attack the dynasty.

In fact, the 23rd and final individual enshrined at Aofeng was Huang Daozhou (1585-1646), a Ming loyalist from south Fujian who fought against the Qing. Huang had been a high official and scholar in the late Ming and an enthusiastic member of the Donglin clique and Restoration Society (Fushe) pushing for political reform. His outspokenness and moral rigidity during the Tianqi and Chongzhen reigns caused him to be demoted, banished, and imprisoned.[76] Huang deftly cultivated a reputation for loyalty and filial piety, which increased his political

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74 Tsong-han Lee, "Making Moral Decisions: Zhu Xi's 'Outline and Details of the Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government," *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*, 39 (2009): 43-84, 72-73; for an introduction on Hu's political circles and literary activities, see, Cho-ying Lee and Charles Hartman, "A Newly Discovered Inscription by Qin Gui: Its Implications for the History of Song *Daoxue*," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 70, No. 2 (December 2010): 387-448, 433-441; also see, Benjamin Ridgway, "Southern Osmanthus and Northern Pear: The Garden of Xiang Ziyin as a Site of Memory in the Writings of Southern Song Literati," *Journal of Chinese Literature and Culture*, 4:1 (April 2017): 19-55, 31.

75 For a translation of Wang Fuzhi's *Du tongjian lun* ("China and the Barbarian Tribes") see, Wm. Theodore de Bary, et al., *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, Vol. 1 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 547-548. Due to their anti-Manchu nature, many of Wang's texts remained hidden by his decedents until the 19th century when their "rediscovery" helped spark a Hunanese revival to remake China. See, Stephen R. Platt, *Provincial Patriots: The Hunanese and Modern China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 8-33.

76 Lynn A. Struve, *Voices from the Ming-Qing Cataclysm: China in Tigers' Jaws* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 122-125.

appeal to other late Ming reformers.[77] After the collapse of the Ming, Huang joined the court of the Prince of Tang based in Fuzhou. Disappointed with the military inaction of the opportunistic Zheng Zhilong, he led his own low budget military campaign out of Fuzhou, hoping that the people would rise up against the Qing. Yet, it was not to be. He was captured a few months later and executed at Nanjing. Huang was enshrined at Aofeng in recognition of his scholarship and for embodying the virtue of loyalty—loyalty to ethical principles in the face of intense political pressure and then for his loyalty to the fallen Ming. While the anti-Jin stance of Southern Song Neo-Confucians retained a subversive subtext under the Manchus, the Qing court later embraced Ming loyalists like Huang for embodying core ethical values. In contrast to "twice-serving officials" (*erchen huan*) The Qianlong emperor praised Huang as a "perfect man for the age" (*yidai wanren*) and enshrined him in the Confucian temple.[78]

Aofeng's second tier pantheon is notable for its celebration of both scholarly attainment and political action. The individuals of the second tier manifested their scholastic talent—and sincere belief in in *lixue* ideals—through actions intended to benefit the state and the orthodox social order, often at great personal cost. These enshrined individuals therefore constituted a model of Fujianese intellectual and political tradition from the Northern Song to the close of the Ming—a tradition that was to be carried on and transmitted by Aofeng students, the natural heirs to this lineage. Membership in this fictive lineage implied that Aofeng students, assuming they acquired the requisite *lixue* orientation, possessed a legitimate political voice and could use it in a way to similarly benefit the state and social order.

The final tier of Aofeng shrines honored both officials posted to Fujian who patronized the academy and charismatic Aofeng directors (*shanzhang*). Called the "Shrine to the three

[77] Ying Zhang, "The Politics and Practice of Moral Rectitude in the Late Ming: The Case of Huang Daozhou," *Late Imperial China*, 34:2 (December 2013): 52-82, 53-55.
[78] Zhang, 76.

worthies and five teachers" (*San xian wu xiansheng ci*) the shrine later expanded to include twenty-three officials and directors, including former patrons like the governor Chen Hongmou.[79] Nearby, Zhang Boxing was posthumously honored with a separate shrine, befitting his status as the academy's founder. Finally, Aofeng also included a Wenchang pavilion dedicated to a popular Daoist deity beloved of scholars built in 1752 by Chen Hongmou, and a shrine to the local earth god.[80]

Over the course of a year, ritual life at Aofeng continually reinforced the academy's core moral, philosophical and localist messages. Participation in the monthly rituals and the biannual celebrations bound Aofeng students into a larger imagined community, constituted in relation to a muscular *lixue* philosophy, a proud tradition of local scholarship, and the duty to put thought into practicable action—particularly in the political field. The Aofeng Academy created a distinctly Fujianese tradition of *lixue* philosophy and action embodied by native luminary Zhu Xi and the enshrined Fujianese Song and Ming adherents. The Aofeng shrines constituted (architecturally) an intellectual and spiritual lineage. The directors, students, and alumni of the Aofeng Academy were the heirs to this lineage which had local and empire-wide implications.

Part III: Aofeng and Regional Advocacy in the 19th Century

The Academy's role as a ritual center at the heart of a network of like-minded alumni laid the foundations for its transformation into a regional think tank to promote, popularize, and lobby in support of pressing provincial issues. The Aofeng directors and alumni leveraged their position and expertise to develop proposals which they presented to officials in Fuzhou and Beijing. In the late Qianlong period, Aofeng men perceived a disturbing decline in the state's

79 Lai Xifan, *Aofeng shuyuan jilue* (Fuzhou: Haifeng chubanshe, 2014), 273-274.
80 You, 31.

ability to manage an increasingly troubled maritime frontier. In an effort to bolster the state's effectiveness and to promote the interests of the province—particularly economic and security interests—Aofeng directors and alumni provided officials with "expert" information regarding local maritime policy, thereby translating Cheng-Zhu commitments into action. Intersecting with the rising influence of statecraft in Qing intellectual life in the early 19th century, the directors and alumni of the Aofeng "think tank" confronted serious local issues and developed plans of action to resolve them.

Aofeng Academy in the 18th Century

While Aofeng men had often served as ad hoc experts on the maritime frontier and hawkish campaigners for the Qing colonization of Taiwan even in earlier periods, their influence on Qing policy grew during the nineteenth century. 18th century antecedents provided a useful model for 19th century affiliates intent on applying their knowledge to a muscular vision of maritime governance that included expanding the Qing presence on Taiwan. Li Guangdi, one of the academy's honorary founders, originally caught the eye of the Kangxi court not for his *lixue* scholarship but for his role in the Qing conquest of Fujian and Taiwan. Living through the Ming-Qing transition and personally affected by the turmoil—alternately kidnapped by bandits and pressed into the service of a rump Ming regime—Li won the confidence of the Kangxi emperor by guiding the Qing armies into Fujian at great personal risk. Li furthermore was an enthusiastic proponent of the Qing taking over Taiwan and proposed using the admiral Shi Lang, a former confederate of Zheng Chenggong, to carry out the task.[81]

[81] Hummel, 474.

Cai Shiyuan, the Aofeng Academy director and Li Guangdi's former protégé, was also extremely bullish on the Qing colonization of Taiwan. From his position as the Aofeng Academy director, he advised the governor-general and other high ranking officials on how to govern the island, manage local violence there, and promote stability through grain cultivation and cross-strait grain shipments.[82] After his tenure at Aofeng, Cai returned to official service in Beijing. There, the Yongzheng emperor created a short-lived office for the rectification of Fujianese customs (*Fujian guanfeng zhengsu shi*) and recruited Cai to head it.[83] From this position, Cai, now an "expert" on Fujianese affairs in the eyes of the emperor, provided Yongzheng with inside information about the maritime frontier.

Lan Dingyuan (1680-1733), another Aofeng affiliate, also advised the Yongzheng emperor on coastal affairs. Regarded as an expert in maritime affairs and geography by information-starved Qing officials, Lan briefed the emperor on the history of the region, its geography, and techniques for governing Taiwan. Due to his expertise on maritime affairs and geography, the Yongzheng emperor appointed Lan to administrative posts in coastal Guangdong where he assiduously promoted Song- learning. In one dramatic episode reminiscent of Zhang Boxing's conversion of Christian churches into Zhu Xi shrines, Lan expropriated the shrine of a heterodox cult and transformed it into an academy that sacrificed to Song philosophers.[84]

Personal and familial ties, rather than academic predilections, inspired Aofeng men to take an interest in Taiwan and maritime affairs. Li Guangdi and his family suffered personally due to the disorder that accompanied the dynastic transition. Lan Dingyuan, a native of coastal Zhangpu County in southern Fujian, was part of a larger naval lineage. His maritime and Taiwan

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82 The collected writings of Cai Shiyuan contain numerous examples of his advice to Qing officials in Fujian on these issues. See, Cai Shiyuan, *Erxitang wenji*, in *Siku quanshu zhenben*, Vol. 2, ed., Wang Yunwu (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1971).

83 "Cai Shiyuan," liezhuan, *Qing shigao*, ed. Zhao Erxun < hanchi.ihp.sinica.edu.tw> Accessed 11/15/19.

84 Hummel, 440.

"expertise" stemmed from his experience accompanying his cousin in the Qing navy during the outbreak of the Zhu Yigui Rebellion in Taiwan (1721), and his subsequent publication on the history of that rebellion, the "Record of the Pacification of Taiwan" (*Ping Tai ji*). Cai Shiyuan's family had business interests in the cross-strait shipping sphere. A year after his accession as the Yongzheng emperor's expert on rectifying wayward Fujianese customs, Cai's son was implicated by the governor-general of Zhejiang and Fujian for fraudulently issuing shipping license to maritime merchants.[85] From these examples, it is clear that Aofeng alumni and their extended families were deeply embedded within the business and security concerns of the maritime frontier.

The Aofeng alumni of the early 18th century maintained strong connections to the maritime frontier, Fuzhou officials, and Beijing politics. They used their position to influence Qing policy on the provincial and national level. By the end of the Qianlong period and the beginning of the 19th century, however, a shift was underway. Dissatisfaction with the court in Beijing and a progressively turbulent maritime frontier compelled Aofeng directors and alumni to influence Qing policy more locally and with increasing urgency. The directors more consciously elevated Aofeng as a think tank to advocate for pressing maritime issues and began to shift the educational curriculum towards statecraft and governance.

Aofeng in the 19th Century

The likes of Li Guangdi, Cai Shiyuan, and Lan Dingyuan laid the groundwork for Aofeng's 19th century embrace of statecraft and its overriding concern with provincial and maritime affairs. It was the tenure of Zheng Guangce (1759-1804), however, that caused the

85 "Cai Shiyuan," *Qingshigao*.

decisive shift at the tail end of the Qianlong reign. As readers will recall from the anecdote at the beginning of the chapter, Zheng's disillusionment at the corrupt state of the Qing court pushed him away from an official career and compelled him to return to Fujian. The pull to pursue statecraft and address urgent local issues arrived in the form of a disconcerting sign of waning Qing power, the rebellion of Lin Shuangwen in Taiwan.

The Lin Shuangwen Rebellion in Taiwan and the massive Qing military response in 1787 to quell it struck Zheng and other Fujian elites as an existential threat to the province, its security, and its ability to feed itself. Seizing the moment, Zheng lobbied the Qing commander, Fukang'an, with a plan detailing the re-conquest of the island. The first eight points dealt directly with military strategy, such as making use of local braves to fight the rebels, making efficient use of Qing resources by smashing the rebels' strongholds, and opening up villages to disperse the rebels' power. The final four points addressed what Zheng perceived to be the root cause of the disturbance—economic and agricultural instability. Zheng, like generations of thinkers before him, recognized the vulnerability of Fujian and Taiwan to cycles of drought, surges in grain prices, and famine. He also understood the centrality of merchants to the economic health of the province and island, and the essential role they played in ensuring consistent supplies of grain at stable prices. Therefore, Zheng suggested, as the Qing looked forward to reconstruction, that commercial links between Taiwan and the mainland be restored and broadened, that regulations regarding trade be loosened in order to encourage more merchants to ship rice and essentials across the straits, and that the safety of merchant ships from pirates take top priority.[86]

Fukang'an was extremely impressed with Zheng and his proposals and invited him to serve on his staff in Taiwan as a *muyou*. Zheng declined the offer, however, citing the need to

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[86] Zheng Guangce, "Shang Fu jixiang lun Taiwan shi," *Xixia wenchao*, in *Taiwan wenxian huikan*, Vol. 4 (Xiamen: Xiamen daxue chubanshe, 2004), 471-294.

take care of his aged mother. After the rebellion was put down, Zheng again lobbied the new Fujian governor the following year on his proposals for reconstruction that would mitigate future violent outbreaks. As in his previous plan presented to Fukang'an, Zheng's proposals dealt mostly with economy and production. Zheng's plan detailed methods to return peasants, particularly the most destitute ones, back to the land. At the same time, the government needed to exercise closer management of property disputes and the responsibility to run military farms in order to assert closer oversight and prevent disputes from metastasizing into larger disturbances.[87]

The rebellion in Taiwan compelled Zheng to examine the uprising's social dynamics and to use his position and influence to address long-running problems with Fujian's particular ecology and vulnerabilities. In Zheng's view, the most essential things were to ensure productivity among small-time cultivators and incentives for sea-faring merchants. These commitments presaged a longtime preoccupation with economic and agricultural security. Mirroring contemporary thinkers like Hong Liangji and Bao Shichen, Zheng was deeply concerned with production, finance, and profit (*li*). Acutely aware of the connection between economic hardship and social violence in Fujian and Taiwan, Zheng was primarily concerned with the precarity of smalltime cultivators, seafaring merchants, and coastal residents who eked out a living producing salt. He was most forceful in his advocacy of the improvement and expansion of irrigation infrastructure to support the agricultural economy. Though most obviously concerned with the outlook in his home province, Zheng was also concerned about the economic health of the Qing Empire and the need to maintain agricultural output in order to sustain basic subsistence. Zheng understood that the empire's agricultural health was primarily a

[87] Zheng Guangce, "Shang zhongcheng Xu Liangsong shi Taiwan shanhou shiyi shu," *Xixia wenchao*, 5-29.

problem of geography. Although the southern half of the empire enjoyed favorable climate and plentiful water, the land itself could not sustain the rapidly increasing population. The problem in the north, however, was precisely the opposite: land was plentiful, but water was scarce. Adding to the geographical pressure was the ponderous tribute rice system. Thus, Zheng advocated a massive expansion in irrigation infrastructure in the north to expand cultivation and increase agricultural productivity. In turn, a more prosperous north would relieve the economic pressure in the south.[88]

Zheng Guangce's experience with the rebellion in Taiwan and his deep interest in statecraft became the central thrust of his teaching philosophy as the director of the Aofeng Academy. During his tenure, Zheng worried about the increasing disconnect between study and utility. He argued that students ought to learn for the purpose of bringing about real-world results (*jing bang ji shi*), and designed lessons that reflected his commitment to statecraft. At the same time, he encouraged Aofeng students to dedicate themselves to a worthy cause, study what previous thinkers had written about a particular topic, and use the classical tradition to make a reasonable judgment in order to achieve meaningful, real-world results (*shi xi pi yan*). In the heady atmosphere of the early Jiaqing reign, Zheng drilled statecraft studies into his students, and encouraged them to read and think broadly and practically. One of his students, Lin Zexu, would later record his teacher's formative impact at Aofeng and recall his exhortation to "understand the substance of things and become useful" (*mingti dayong*). Clearly, Zheng wanted to raise a new generation of morally-grounded scholars explicitly oriented towards practicality and statecraft at Aofeng, even as he lobbied ranking territorial officials with his administrative and economic proposals.

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[88] Zheng Guangce, "Ni Ouyang Wenzhong gong benlun," *Xixia wenchao*, 336-346.

The turn to statecraft began during the early 19th century and accelerated under Chen Shouqi's tenure as the academy director. In the late Jiaqing period, Chen had replaced You Guangyi, the successor of Zheng Guangce. A native of Xiapu County in northern Fujian, You (*jinshi* winner of 1789) had served in the territorial administration in Shaanxi in the early Jiaqing period. There, he took advantage of the new emperor's opening the pathway of words (*yanlu*) in order to voice criticism regarding the selection and alleged misuse of personnel in the Qing administration. Although the details of his complaint remain obscure, You's criticism greatly displeased Jiaqing. The emperor ordered him removed from his post, but You was tapped to be the new director at Aofeng following his disgrace.[89] At Aofeng, You presided over the publication of the academy's first gazetteer, and solicited prefaces from the governor-general, governor, and other ranking officials in Taiwan. A product of his historical moment—making his career at Aofeng after angering the Jiaqing emperor with his political criticisms—You eventually displeased a later governor who alleged that his oversight of students was lax. Chen was appointed to discipline Aofeng by reinstituting Zhang Boxing's rules based on Zhu Xi's academy regulations.

Born the son of an academy director, Chen shared many he shared several points of reference and interests with Zheng Guangce. As a young man of 18 *sui*, the Lin Shuangwen Rebellion also constituted a formative experience, and he composed a widely circulated poem praising the military response and extolling Fukang'an, the campaign commander. Deeply interested in the Fujianese *lixue* tradition, Chen eventually matriculated into the Aofeng Academy and studied under the same charismatic *lixue* advocate, Meng Chaoran. Unlike Zheng, however, Chen enjoyed an official career. As previously mentioned, his affiliation with Ruan

89 Liang Zhangju, "You Guangyi," *Guochao chengong yanxing* ji, in *Qingdai zhuanji congkan*, Vol 55, Ed., Zhou Junfu (Taipei: Mingwen shuju, 1985), 505-508.

Yuan changed his scholarly perspective somewhat, and he developed a Han-Song syncretist approach. Chen's changing perspective was not only due to Ruan's influence, but also stemmed from an increasing sense of urgency and danger from the massive pirate fleets during the early Jiaqing period. As Chen taught at the Fuwen Academy in Hangzhou, he looked on with worry and dismay as his mentor assumed the governorship of Zhejiang and struggled to deal with pirate raids that were now extending along the coasts of Guangdong, Fujian, and Zhejiang.

Fears over maritime security, unrest in Taiwan, food security, and the vulnerable economic lives of coastal peoples inspired Chen's Fujian and maritime advocacy during his tenure as the Aofeng Academy director. Like his predecessors, Chen used his position at the Aofeng Academy to influence ranking officials in residence in Fuzhou. Chen wrote frequently to the governor-general, governor and other high officials on urgent local and Fujianese affairs, particularly anti-pirate strategy, local affrays (*xiedou*), grain shipping networks between the mainland and Taiwan, fluctuations in rice pricing, the salt and fishing trades, the state of provincial waterworks, and opium.[90] Like his predecessor, Chen was most impressed with the linkage between economic insecurity and violence. He evinced particular concern with the lot of who worked in vulnerable professions, notably smalltime cultivators, fishermen, and salt-makers. His proposals laid out Fujian's maritime affairs in the context of the province's history, geography, and natural and social ecology in order to provide transient imperial officials with a frame of reference and "expert" opinions. The Aofeng directorship was becoming a center from which to catch the ear of resident officials and influence local policy.

Why would local officials pay attention to the Aofeng directors and entertain their policy proposals on governing the maritime frontier? The institutional and cultural authority of the

[90] For many examples, see Chen Shouqi, *Zuohai wenji*, especially juan 3-6.

academy and the characteristics of the directorship may provide some clues. First, Aofeng enjoyed endorsement and support from three Qing emperors, and its philosophical outlook matched the Qing orthodoxy of *lixue*. The academy also enjoyed a close working relationship with Fuzhou officials themselves—officials proctored one of the Aofeng examinations (*guanke*) and oversaw the academy finances. Second, the Aofeng directors were frequently former officials themselves and at least holders of the *jinshi* degree. In Beijing, they ran in the same social circles, and understood courtly and official life Thus, the directors were the peers of the officials, providing them a source of affinity. Officials and Aofeng directors were both socially and spatially proximate: because the provincial and prefectural yamens were all clustered in Fuzhou, and thus a consultation with the Aofeng director was easily procured.

Adding to this mix was the increasing cultural clout of the Aofeng Academy in the early 19th century, particularly under the leadership of Chen Shouqi. Within Aofeng, Chen reinvigorated the strict Zhu Xi-inspired regulations, and instituted an educational agenda that de-emphasized the pursuit of examination success in favor of a more expansive educational vision, in which utility and practical problem-solving assumed a more central focus for Aofeng Academy students. As Chen sought to personally embody the virtue of utility by lobbying Fujian's officials with statecraft-inspired proposals, he also took seriously proposals by other Aofeng alumni scattered throughout Fujian in sub-bureaucratic posts and helped popularize them, as will be shown in Chapter Three. Additionally, he campaigned to elevate Aofeng notables beyond the academy gates and expand their cultural clout. First, he lobbied Fujian officials to have several distinguished Aofeng alumni be granted entry into the Shrine for Local Worthies (*Xiangxian ci*). Included in the shrine was Chen Genghuan, an early proponent of Han-Song syncretism, and two instructors (*jiaoyu*) whose treatises on Taiwan and maritime security

changed Qing policy on the central level. Second, Chen was successful in elevating one of the Aofeng lineage members entry into the Confucian Temple in Beijing: Huang Daozhou. The Aofeng Academy would now have one of its own enshrined in the capital. From Fuzhou to Beijing, the enshrinement of Aofeng alumni and lineage members reinforced their increasing relevance and activism in local and national political life.

Indeed, Aofeng alumni and associates who did not possess a *jinshi* degree or enjoy an illustrious official career were becoming more politically active in local political life. And whereas the directors of Aofeng lobbied officials with from a position of complementary peerage and cooperation, those occupying a lower social station and scattered throughout the province were often much more confrontational. As will be detailed in later chapters, Aofeng alumni who worked in the sub-bureaucratic post of instructor (*jiaoyu* and *xundao*) in particular were becoming more active politically.

Instructor Agitation and Aofeng Alumni Protests

In one example, an Aofeng alumni named Wu Yulin (*juren* 1777) served in seven successive stints as an instructor in various Fujianese and Taiwanese counties. In keeping with the Aofeng ethos, Wu expanded the boundaries of his teaching post by seeking to promote local benefit and dispel harmful practices (*xingli chubi wei jiren*). Additionally, he was a close observer of local practices, and wrote several collections of poetry based on his experiences. In his final post, he was stationed in Fengshan County in southern Taiwan, where he actively stimulated agricultural production by revamping the local waterworks, enlarging the reservoir ponds, and facilitating irrigation. At the same time, Wu exposed the magistrate's administrative abuse, and accused him of forty counts of corruption. Wu tried to get the attention of higher

officials but was rebuffed. In an act of defiance, Wu refused to welcome the magistrate back at the outskirts of the county, citing passages from the text of educational administration (*Xuezheng quanshu*) to justify his actions. For his outspokenness and lack of respect, Wu was framed, and forced into exile in Hunan.[91] Clearly, Wu understood his role to be more than that of a mere teacher: by improving the livelihoods of residents in concrete ways and exposing the misdeeds of the magistrate he elevated himself as a local advocate, even at great personal risk.

Aofeng alumni continued to assert themselves in Fujian's politics in the Jiaqing period, and targeted official corruption through dramatic displays of mass action. In one instance in 1817, a strange case of corruption and suicide gripped Fujian. Li Gengyun (1754-1817), the Fujian *buzhengshi*, was arrested for alleged corruption. Interrogated by the governor-general, Wang Zhiyi, and the governor, Wang Shaolan, he strenuously protested his innocence, and hanged himself in his cell. The shocked Jiaqing emperor dispatched imperial envoys to Fujian in order to get to the truth of the matter. As the envoys approached Fuzhou, they were met by four hundred literati protesters and several thousand other participants led by an Aofeng alumni, Lin Guangtian. Lin was another of the famed Meng Chaoran students, and a devotee of Zhu Xi. While a promising student, he did not achieve much examination success. Becoming a *shengyuan* in 1807, he made his living as a tutor. As the envoys approached, Lin and the 400 literati presented them with a petition that called for justice for the dead Li and an investigation into his persecutors, particularly the governor-general and governor. The envoys also discovered that Lin and the literati protesters had also constructed a shrine to the dead Li (*aizhuan ci*). According to Lin's biography, he requested that Chen Shouqi compose a record (*ji*) for this

[91] Zheng Zuqing, *Houguan xian xiangtu zhi* (Fuzhou: difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, 2001), 368.

shrine, but I have not located it.[92] Qing archival documents preserve a list of the names of the literati protestors. As the leader of the literati protest, Lin's name appears first. The other names are categorized according to degree status from *juren* down to *tongsheng*, and finally ending with the local elders (*qi min*). Not a single *jinshi* holder appears in the list.[93] As a result of the envoy's investigation, Wang Zhiyi and Wang Shaolan were removed from their posts and permanently barred from an official career. There appears to have been no negative consequences for Lin or the literati protesters for their dramatic action.

Why would four hundred literati protestors led by a tutor from the Aofeng Academy care so passionately about "justice" for a dead official? There are no clear answers why Lin and his band felt such disgust towards the ranking Fujian officials that it prompted so dramatic an action. At the same time, another Aofeng alumni named Zhang Jiliang observed the unfolding events and included his thoughts on the affair in a private collection of biographies. In Zhang's gossipy backstory, the whole affair was entirely due to a clash of rival officials within the Fujian administration. It was touched off by Wu Xiangxian, yet another Aofeng alumnus and *jinshi* degree holder. Wu, a close associate of the governor-general Wang Zhiyi, asked Li Gengyun to release a robber who was a friend of his son. Li refused the favor, and the governor-general bore him a grudge. The corruption charge provided a convenient pretext to get rid of Li. After Li's suicide, an ambitious circuit intendant named Sun Erzhun whipped up public sentiment against Wang and the governor. He made particular use of aggrieved salt merchants who were angry over the policies of the governor-general. The public pressure eventually caused the removal of Wang Zhiyi, and Sun Erzhun took his position as the new governor-general.[94] Whatever the truth

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92 Zheng Zuqing, 328.

93 Unknown, memorial of JQ 22/3/30, Qing Palace Archives (QPA), National Palace Museum, Taipei: Imperially rescripted palace memorials (*zhupi zouzhe*).

94 Zhang Jiliang, "Wang Zhiyi zhuan," *Jiaojiu lu* (Minguo Fujian xiuzhiju chaoben).

of these allegations and whatever the source of Zhang's information, the account is notable for its utter disgust with the state of officials in Fujian (and even with one Aofeng alumni). Presented as out of touch and more concerned more with petty advantage in the service of career advancement than good administration, Zhang appeared to channel the frustration felt by his fellow classmates and lower-degree holders against provincial officials. One could also read Zhang's biographies as a didactic tale of the consequences of bad administration: the horrifying coda of the Li Gengyun affair resulted in the carnage of the Sun Erzhun administration. In the following biography of Sun, Zhang related how a disturbance in Taiwan compelled the new governor-general to cross the strait and massacre innocents there in a cynical ploy to ingratiate himself with the Jiaqing emperor.[95]

From the 18th to the 19th century, there appears to have been a shift in the orientation of those Aofeng alumni involved in regional advocacy. Those like Cai Shiyuan and Lan Dingyuan maintained a dual provincial and national orientation, and directly appealed to Qing emperors based on their presumed expertise in maritime affairs and with the understanding that important matters were decided at Beijing. By the turn of the 19th century, Aofeng directors, deeply troubled by corruption and dysfunction at the Qianlong court, focused their advocacy at provincial levels, targeting officials in residence in Fuzhou. At the same time, directors like Zheng Guangce and Chen Shouqi intensified their efforts to promote statecraft education at the Aofeng Academy in order to foster new generations of students less concerned with examination success than with affecting meaningful change on the local and provincial levels. Their efforts appeared to have been at least somewhat effective. Former Aofeng students were scattered throughout the province, embedded within lineages involved in the military and in overseas trade.

[95] Ibid.

They also occupied sub-bureaucratic posts in counties throughout Fujian and Taiwan. Anxious to bring about practical help for people in their locality, they were also increasingly unafraid to challenge Qing officials. Indeed, Wu Yulin the instructor and Lin Guangtian the lowly tutor showed real contempt for Qing officials perceived to be corrupt or incompetent. Over the early 19th century, the Aofeng Academy had fostered new generations of empowered alumni eager to confront backyard challenges, and obstreperous enough to challenge imperial administrators.

Conclusion

This chapter traced the evolution of the Aofeng Academy over two centuries, from an institution rooted in the intellectual commitments of 17th century *lixue* to a center for advocating solutions to local maritime issues in the 19th century. This change of the reflects a long-term trend of broadening participation by graduates of the Academy in conducting local affairs and consequentially, the devolution of responsibility for regional issues to lower ranking officials. This process was made possible by the convergence of several factors. The first was the role of the Aofeng ritual lineage which celebrated former worthies who had been involved in pressing local affairs and implicitly encouraged living members of the lineage to do the same. Thus, successive generations of Aofeng alumni were legitimized in their efforts to become involved in local affairs. Such involvement of Aofeng alumni contributed to an already emerging provincial orientation and identity in Fujian by the 19th century. Increasingly, the Aofeng Academy emphasized the study of statecraft focused on officials impacting change as opposed to obtaining knowledge for the sake of scholarship. Finally, Aofeng alumni benefitted from a willing audience in Qing officials who were willing to listen to them because of they were regarded as "safe" allies based on their intellectual orthodoxy.

CHAPTER TWO

The Surprising Significance of the Insignificant: The Social Life of the County Instructor

In his classic study, *Local Government in China Under the Ch'ing*, T'ung-tsu Ch'ü devotes a section of his analysis of the structure of the county government to discuss "the insignificance of subordinate officials." Ch'ü argues that all subcounty county functionaries, regarded as "idle officials" (*xiancao*) and "superfluous officials" (*rongguan*), played no meaningful role in county government, thereby forcing the local magistrate and his staff to shoulder the wide-ranging burdens of county administration. Included in Ch'ü's list of "idle officials" were the county educational officers (*jiaozhi*), the instructor (*jiaoyu*), and assistant instructor (*xundao*).[96] But just how insignificant were these subcounty officials, really? And did their role change over time? How might the picture change if we examine archival sources and the writings of educational officials themselves? And how might renewed attention to their role change our perspective on how state and society operated at the lowest levels? This chapter explores the institutional and social roles of subcounty educational officials, namely the county instructor. Officially, these "idle officials" oversaw county educational and ritual life, but unofficially their work was more complex. While instructors labored as low-level bureaucrats, they often did so within their home province and retained strong local ties. Because they performed services vital to the state by controlling students and monitoring local literary life, their connection to their home province and ability to marshal local resources presented instructors with opportunities to become advocates for local issues and achieve a degree of political influence in the 19th century.

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[96] T'ung-tsu Ch'ü, *Local Government in China Under the Ch'ing* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962), 9-10. Ch'ü translates *jiaoyu* as "director of studies" and *xundao* as "assistant director of studies." For the sake of brevity and consistency, I have decided to adopt Charles O. Hucker's translation of "instructor" and "assistant instructor" from his text, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985).

Instructors: A short introduction

Instructors and assistant instructors represented the deepest reach of the Qing state in the realm of education. They staffed the county school (*ruxue*) established in each district, and the schools were typically staffed with one instructor and one assistant instructor each.[97] As members of the state education apparatus, their primary responsibilities were to teach the *shengyuan* of the county, manage their progress, prepare them for the examinations, and draw up lists of candidates qualified to take the exams. The curriculum the instructors taught was regulated by the government and tied explicitly to the state examination system. The government selected and distributed the textbooks, particularly the Four Books and Five Classics.[98] Therefore, the central purpose of the instructors was to instruct and raise a new crop of degree winners and potential officials to staff the state bureaucracy.

As low-ranking government functionaries, instructors were bound within a web of administrative oversight. County instructors were overseen by the Provincial Director of Education (*xuezheng*), tasked with supervising local- and provincial-level examinations.[99] Lists of instructors in county gazetteers and Qing archival documents demonstrate that the ranks of instructors were drawn from lower-degree winners, particularly *gongsheng* and *juren*-degree holders, yet instructors generally appeared to have higher educational credentials than assistant instructors. The Qing government took an active interest in maintaining the quality of its county instructors. The Shunzhi and Kangxi emperors advocated annual testing of instructors to ensure teaching standards. Instructors whose test scores were substandard could be forced to return to their studies until the next round of testing; others who performed exceptionally poorly would be

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[97] A cursory glance of the *Qing shilu* or *Qing huidian* reveals that several counties had only one instructor or assistant instructor. Emperors regularly issued edicts that established or eliminated instructor positions.

[98] Kung-Chuan Hsiao, *Rural China: Imperial Control in the Nineteenth Century* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1967), 240.

[99] Hucker, 142-143. Instructors were ranked 8a.

dismissed from the service outright.[100] Ironically, county magistrates who displayed unsatisfactory job performance could be demoted to county instructor.[101] In addition to routine testing, the Kangxi emperor also purged office-buyers from the ranks of county instructors in a move to maintain performance standards.[102] Finally, in an effort to boost instructor dedication and professionalism of the county instructors, the Qianlong emperor raised their ranking by one degree and granted each instructor a full salary.[103] According to various gazetteer records and entries within the *Qing Huidian*, instructors could expect to receive about 40 taels per annum, putting their salary slightly behind that of county magistrates.[104] Instructors served 6-year terms before being reviewed by both the Provincial Director of Education and the provincial governor, and approved by the Board of Personnel in Beijing.[105] Assuming that the instructor did not commit any crimes or demonstrate behavioral problems during his tenure, and was in reasonably robust health, an instructor could serve another 6-year stint in his county, be transferred to a school in a different county, or even be promoted to the rank of magistrate.

The routine evaluation of one Zhang Zhunian demonstrates a typical career of an instructor. The *tiben* from the Board of Personnel reveals that Zhang, a native of Hongya County in Sichuan, was a former second-tier tribute student (*gongsheng*) who was selected to serve as an educational official. He served as an assistant instructor (*xundao*) in Qingfu County from 1803 to 1809. After he received a passing evaluation, he again served as the assistant instructor of Qingfu county, but the death of his father forced him to return home in 1811 to observe the ritual

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100 Suerna, *Qinding xuezheng quanshu*, Shen Yunlong, ed., (Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1969), 409.

101 Suerna, 414.

102 Suerna, 410.

103 Suerna, 416. Before 1736, the *jiaoyu* and *xundao* had to split a single salary (*feng*).

104 Chung-li Chang also estimates that instructors also received an "extra income" of around 1,500 taels, but it is unclear how he derived this figure. Chung-li Chang, *The Income of the Chinese Gentry* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962), 33.

105 *Da Qing Gaozong chun (Qianlong) huangdi shilu*, Vol. 9 (Taipei: Taiwanhua shuwenju zongfaxing, 1964), 6567b.

mourning period. In 1818, he was selected to serve as the instructor (*jiaoyu*) of Jintang county but had to defer to follow the mourning protocol for his deceased mother. After his mourning obligations were completed, Zhang went on to serve as instructor of Jintang county. He received a favorable evaluation in 1824 and remained in that post for another term. Three years later in 1827, he was evaluated again. By this time, he was 51 *sui*. Upon review, the provincial authorities found Zhang to still be conscientious, in good health, and a talented teacher. Specifically, he had paid his taxes in full and was able to control the students under his charge. He was not implicated in any crimes or mischief, nor did he engage in any lawsuits. His evaluators on this basis recommended that Zhang be promoted to magistrate.[106] Zhang's case was typical. Beginning his career as a tribute student, he was employed as an instructor for 24 years in Sichuanese counties, gradually making the transition from assistant instructor to full instructor. Assuming the Board of Personnel agreed with the recommendation of his evaluators, Zhang would have served as a magistrate somewhere outside of his home province.

The evaluation process appears to have remained more or less the same over the course of the Qing, even up until the end of the dynasty. Wang Congqian, aged 44 *sui*, was up for his 6th year evaluation as the instructor of Huating County in Gansu in 1905. A native of Gaolan County in Gansu, Wang had previously won the *juren* degree in 1891 and the *jinshi* degree in 1898 and was then selected to serve as an educational official. He was posted to Huating County to serve as its instructor the same year he won the *jinshi* and took up his post early the following year. In 1904, he completed his term and was evaluated by the Provincial Educational Director and the governor and found to be satisfactory. The report was sent to the central government in

[106] Wen Fu, memorial of DG 7/10/5, First Historical Archives, Ming-Qing Archives (MQA), Beijing, Imperially rescripted palace memorials (*zhupi zouzhe*).

Beijing.[107] It is likely that Wang continued to serve as an instructor, whether in Huating or in another county. Alternatively, he might have been promoted to a magistrate, as Zhang had been.

The cases above also show that instructors served in county schools in their home province. Notably, despite being members of the Qing bureaucracy, instructors were not subject to the same law of avoidance that governed other territorial officials which barred them from taking up posts within their native province. Instructors served in their home province but were prohibited from taking office in their home prefecture. This had not always been the case. In the Ming dynasty, instructors were barred from serving in their native province like other officials. In 1571, the law was changed to exempt instructors, along with a few other subcounty posts from serving outside their home province. The reason for the change was due to the very low salary of these functionaries, which made travel to outside provinces an enormous financial burden. Frequently, instructors were unwilling to bear the cost, and declined the post outright. Others, after their terms of office ended, were unable to afford the return journey home, and were stranded. Because these officials were not responsible for governing, the Ming court reasoned, there was little danger of them forming local political bonds that would challenge the state. The updated regulation appears to have been implemented more or less immediately: lists of instructors and their native places in county gazetteers demonstrate that in the late Longqing and early Wanli periods, instructors were nearly all native to the province. Yet, despite the ostensibly apolitical nature of the post, the Kangxi emperor issued an edict that forbade county instructors from interfering in public affairs and warned regular officials from handing over administrative duties to them.[108] The emperor's prohibition implies that county instructors did occasionally

[107] Song-fan, memorial of GX 31/2/15, Grand Council Archives (GCA). The difference in credentials between this case and the previous one (*jinshi* vs. *gongsheng*) may indicate increased examination competition in the late Qing.
[108] Suerna, 415.

assume administrative responsibilities, making them more active locally than the imperial government intended.

The county schools in which the instructors worked consisted of a square-shaped gated compound which housed lecture halls and shrines to Confucius and Zhu Xi (*wenmiao*). The compound often contained rooms for the instructors' living quarters. Instructors were responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the school and shrines; failure to preserve the structure could result in administrative consequences. In the winter of 1905, a fire suddenly broke out at a school in Zhili province. The instructor and his students charged in to snuff it out, but not before the fire burned through some of the shrines. After an investigation revealed other incidents with fire the year before, the instructor was found culpable due to his carelessness and forced to restore the shrines and replace the ritual implements.[109] In another incident, in 1815, a fire forced a county instructor in Fujian to transform one of the school shrines into his residence. Investigators were shocked to discover a vegetable garden growing in the courtyard, and books, teapots, and daily implements strewn over the school shrines. For his lack of decorum, the instructor was duly cashiered.[110] Clearly, maintaining a level of decorum and respecting the school and shrines represented a core feature of the instructor's public persona.

In addition to teaching and preparing students for the examinations, instructors also functioned as ritual technicians who sacrificed at the shrines attached to the county school. Instructors took charge of the spring and autumn sacrifices at shrines that were attached to the county school and Confucian temple, namely the shrine to prominent local officials (*minghuan ci*) and the shrine to local worthies (*xiangxian ci*). They could also perform sacrificial duties at the

[109] Yuan Shikai, memorial of GX 31/2/10, QPA.
[110] Wang Zhiyi, memorial of JQ 20/5/20, QPA.

shrine to loyal and filial personages (*zhongxiao ci*) and the shrine to chaste women (*jieyi ci*).[111] Information gleaned from biographies of instructors in gazetteers and contained in other local publications demonstrate that county instructors frequently took the initiative to renovate local shrines and plan for their maintenance and funding.[112] The writings of one county instructor named Zheng Jiancai demonstrate his deep preoccupation with the role of shrines in local life. Serving in Taiwan during the early Jiaqing reign, Zheng witnessed raids by massive pirate fleets, local rebellion, and the lingering effects of the Lin Shuangwen Rebellion from the late Qianlong reign. Zheng therefore took it upon himself to review cases and compile lists of individuals killed in the recent disturbances in order that they receive sacrifices in Taiwan county's Manifest Loyalty Shrine (*zhaozhong ci*) and the Shrine for the Loyal, Righteous, and Filial and Fraternal (*zhongyi xiaoti ci*).[113] At the same time, he and another instructor surnamed Xie compiled a revised gazetteer for Taiwan county, another project often undertaken by county instructors. Therefore, instructors' service as ritual specialists in local state-sponsored shrines that honored the virtues of loyalty and filiality placed them at the center of a performance that celebrated both orthodox values and local memory.

Performing their essential duties in the realm of education and ritual, the day-to-day routine of working in county administration was often stressful. Archival sources document numerous instances of instructors squabbling with other sub-bureaucratic personnel or even with the county magistrate. In several cases, these petty conflicts could erupt into an open brawl. In one such instance, Yan Jie, the instructor of Fengtai county in Shanxi, bore a grudge against a yamen clerk for displaying ostentatious behavior. One day in 1780, there was a ceremony to burn

111 For an explanation of the instructor's ritual performance at these shrines see Fuqian Fang and Yifu Wu, eds, *Yongding xianzhi* (*Daoguang*) (Xiamen: Xiamen University Press, 2012), 235.
112 *Minxian zhongyi xiaoti zhuan* (ben ci cangban, 1851).
113 Zheng Jiancai, "Zhaozhong ci gaojun wen," *Liuting wenji* (Taiwan, Daoguang edition).

incense in the county school. Before the ceremony began, Yan saw the clerk coming down the road riding in a sedan with four bearers. Incensed over the clerk's breach of decorum, Yan raced out onto the road and smashed the sedan. Yet, the clerk was not cowed. Shortly thereafter, he rode in another sedan with four bearers, again provoking the instructor to attack it. This time only the window was smashed. The ongoing fights between the instructor and clerk became something of a running joke in Fengtai county, but did not amuse the county's higher officials. An investigation into the incident revealed a notoriously ill-tempered instructor with a tendency to berate subordinates. For his unseemly disposition and public brawling, he was cashiered.[114]

Conflicts between instructors and lower county functionaries often involved petty jealousies or personal incompatibilities. Clashes with county magistrates by contrast tended to erupt over "turf wars" of administrative boundaries. In many archival documents, county instructors accused magistrates—often falsely—of corruption or with mistreating *shengyuan* over conflicts involving students and funding for local schools. If magistrate intervened in what instructors considered to be their affairs, instructors could become territorial, even to the point of bringing false charges in order to protect their prerogatives. In turn, magistrates often charged instructors for displaying tyrannical behavior towards their students or with corruption. Often these charges were true.

Because instructors had ultimate responsibility over their *shengyuan* and compiled the rolls of those eligible to take the civil examinations, opportunities for taking advantage of their charges were plentiful. In one case, the instructor of a county in Sichuan forced students to pay him a bribe to include their names in the examination rolls.[115] The need to maintain and renovate the school provided instructors with another motivation to take advantage of their students

[114] Kaning'a, memorial of QL 45/7/4, MQA; Bailing, memorial of QL 45/7/4, MQA.
[115] Zhang Shiyu, memorial of QL 5/4/21, MQA.

financially. In 1786, the two instructors of a county in Zhili province discovered that a *shengyuan* surnamed Nie had purchased a concubine during the mourning period for his mother. Instead of reporting the matter to the magistrate, the instructors blackmailed their student for money in order to repair the school. When the affair came to light, the instructors were cashiered for overstepping their authority. Nie was stripped of his student status as well.[116]

Serving as low-level officials within their home province, county instructors were unusual within the Qing bureaucratic hierarchy. Tasked with the instruction of students, preparing them for examinations, and sacrificing in local shrines, instructors served the educational and ritual needs of both the imperial state and local society. Their connection to the state bureaucracy and local ties compelled them to be at home in both worlds. They (at least in theory) assisted in the state's mission of spreading "benevolent" government and the norms of civilization through educational attainment. They also provided a degree of educational and ritual standardization within each county of the empire. At the same time, the instructor's role in local society was often quite fraught. As we will see in the following sections, instructors were responsible for controlling *shengyuan* and overseeing local literary life. At the same time, they often used their provincial connections and status as a means to lobby for local initiatives.

Controlling Shengyuan

The *shengyuan* (government students and winners of the county-level exam) of Fu'an County in northern Fujian were causing trouble. One of the *shengyuan* was accused of beating up a local runner and resisting the local magistrate. Other students stole into the Confucian temple in the middle of the night to use as a base of operations for deviant activities. Furious, the county

[116] Liu E, memorial of QL 51/10/16, QPA.

magistrate ordered that the wayward *shengyuan* be beaten. For violating statutes on beating *shengyuan*, the magistrate was cashiered. However, it was the local instructor, Xia Minglei, who was held ultimately responsible for the behavior of the wayward *shengyuan*. He was accused of "being unable to restrain" his students and was subsequently cashiered.[117] The case of Xia Minglei illustrates one of the biggest responsibilities and challenges county instructors faced: controlling their own students.

Controlling the county *shengyuan* was perhaps the county instructor's chief duty. Though their status of elevated them into the county elite, *shengyuan* had something of a dubious reputation among both county residents and magistrates. The explosion of *shengyuan* numbers in the Ming dynasty without a parallel rise in the quotas for *juren* and *jinshi* degree winners forced students to turn away from the educational system and instead seek employment as government clerks, litigation masters, and tax farmers—activities that made county administration more complex.[118] As a result, magistrates frequently fingered *shengyuan* as local troublemakers. *Shengyuan* intransigence manifested in a myriad of ways, such as resisting tax collection, organizing local uprisings, and contributing to bureaucratic backlog through their roles as *songshi* or "litigation masters."[119] No less a thinker than Gu Yanwu (1613-1682), the famed philosopher and statecraft thinker, accused *shengyuan* of abandoning their original function as expectant officials in favor of fomenting trouble for officials and commoners.[120] Gu's criticism of *shengyuan*, however, was also linked to their exemption from taxation (*youmian*) and the subsequent decline in state revenues; that *shengyuan* frequently sought employment in

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117 Wang Shiren, memorial of QL 4/3/21, MQA.

118 Ho Ping-ti, *The Ladder of Success in Imperial China: Aspects of Social Mobility, 1368-1911* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), 182; Harry Miller, *State Versus Gentry in Late Ming Dynasty China, 1572-1644* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 16.

119 Tu-ki Min, *National Polity and Local Power: The Transformation of Late Imperial China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 32-49.

120 Gu Yanwu, *Gu Tinglin shiwenji* (Beijing: Zhonghua shujuchuban, 1959), 22.

insalubrious occupations such as litigation masters or county clerks certainly contributed Gu's perception that they were parasites.[121] Local officials in places like southern Fujian were especially suspicious of *shengyuan*. When officials experienced cases of egregious litigation, local disturbances, or communal affrays, they typically blamed *shengyuan* as the ringleaders.[122] For local officials, *shengyuan* constituted a demographic that was prone to local troublemaking and criminal activity, so when incidents emerged, local officials frequently sought to cast the blame on the *shengyuan* as convenient scapegoats. The Qing court also recognized the troublesome nature of *shengyuan*, devoting an entire chapter in a text on education administration to "restraining" their ranks.[123] The imperial government placed responsibility for *shengyuan* behavior squarely on the shoulders of county instructors, and forced them to answer for *shengyuan* crimes.[124] Because instructors were directly responsible for *shengyuan* conduct, unruly students could land instructors in trouble. In egregious cases, county instructors could be cashiered and removed from office, as was the case for Xia Minglei.

Certainly, local officials hoped that instructors could exert a stabilizing effect over students and curb their potentially disruptive behavior through the logic of transformation through education. In some cases, instructors appeared to have been successful in mollifying unruly students. In 1725, Wang Guodong, the Provincial Director of Education in Henan submitted a memorial to the Yongzheng emperor requesting that the routine transfer of the Lushi county instructor be placed on hold. Previously, Lushi county experienced local disturbances in which angry county residents had surrounded the yamen and harassed the local officials. The county *shengyuan* were reported to have been in the unruly crowd. Wang reported that although

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121 Miller, 36.

122 Melissa A. Macauley, "Disputes in Southeast Coastal China, 1723-1820," *Civil Law in Qing and Republican China*, eds., Kathryn Bernhardt and Philip C.C.Huang (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994): 101.

123 Suerna, *Qinding xuezheng quanshu*, 433-452.

124 Suerna, *Qinding xuezheng quanshu*, 426.

the atmosphere in the county remained tense, Liu Jin, the Lushi county instructor had been able to control his *shengyuan* and prevent more disturbances from breaking out. Wang wrote:

> The scholars are the eyes and ears of the common people. The education officials are examples for the scholars. All the educational officials under me are invariably conscientious…[125]

Yet, Wang feared that once Liu was transferred out, the replacement instructor would be unable to restrain the *shengyuan*. Because Liu "understood local conditions" and ably suppressed the rowdy *shengyuan*, Wang reported, he was essential to maintaining a peaceful social milieu in Lushi county.[126] In Wang's hierarchical conception of social order, diligent instructors provided a moral example for the *shengyuan*, who, in turn, kept order among the commoners. An ideal county instructor therefore anchored the local social structure in order to ensure a well-ordered county life.

Despite Liu Jin's adroit handling of the Lushi county students, controlling *shengyuan* could prove an impossible and dangerous task for county instructors. In 1855, *shengyuan* in three counties in Henan formed a *tuanlian* organization for protection against marauding Nian rebels. The *shengyuan*, however, used their organization as a vehicle for organizing locals to challenge officials and resist remittance of tax grain, as well as for robbing other locals. The instructors, including one who had been appointed the year before, were afraid to challenge their locally powerful students. One assistant instructor did, impotently, warn the *shengyuan* against using the *tuanlian* organization to stir up trouble during the monthly examinations, but his warnings had little impact. The wayward *tuanlian* therefore had to be smashed by official troops, and the rebellious *shengyuan* leaders were executed. Despite the obvious power differential, the Henan governor blamed the incident on the instructors for not properly restraining the *shengyuan* and

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125 Wang Guodong, memorial of Zhongzheng, QPA.
126 Ibid.

not reporting earlier on their behavior, resulting in the establishment of the rebellious *tuanlian* organization. For their supposed failure to reign in their wayward charges, the governor recommended that the instructors be cashiered. The Xianfeng emperor called for the assistant instructor who warned the *shengyuan* during the monthly testing sessions to be cashiered, and he ordered another instructor to serve in the military to atone for his negligence.[127] This case reveals how closely the fate of instructors was tied to the behavior of their students. Overseen from above by officials who demanded they control unruly students, county instructors' power to change wayward *shengyuan* was likely limited.

Of course, it is possible that county instructors were also used as convenient scapegoats to deflect criticism away from other officials during instances of egregious student behavior. In one instance in 1774, the governor of Shandong accused *shengyuan* and one *wusheng* (military students) of being involved in bandit gangs planning to burn parts of Qingzhou and robbing ships. The governor blamed the county instructors for their students' alleged crimes. For their failure to properly teach the students to the point where they could "not tell right from wrong," the governor recommended that the instructors be punished.[128] Because instructors were directly responsible for the *shengyuan* they supervised, higher officials could scapegoat them when reporting on incidents involving students and to thereby deflect further inquiries.

Despite the dramatic examples detailed above, most of the instances in which instructors were punished for *shengyuan* misbehavior tended to result from disputes leading to low-level violence with locals or with yamen runners over tax arrears. These incidents often came to light only because provoked magistrates beat unruly *shengyuan*, which constituted a violation of imperial statutes. In short, *shengyuan* misbehavior tended to land the entire county governing

[127] Ying Gui, memorial of XF 6/5/15, QPA.
[128] Yang Jingsu, memorial of QL 39/10/24, QPA; Yang Jingsu, memorial of QL 39/10/10, QPA.

structure in trouble. The county instructor needed to exercise a high degree of control over the county *shengyuan* and channel their energies away from "deviant" activities. By controlling this volatile stratum of local elites (an often impossible task), the instructor—ideally— anchored the county social hierarchy.

Controlling Information

In 1731, the students of Xia county in southwestern Shanxi made an alarming discovery. An anonymous handbill had been posted on a wall. In doggerel verse the placard proclaimed the innocence of a bandit surnamed Lü, and threated violence. The students ran to inform Gao Zhen, the county instructor, and brought him to view the placard. Gao peeled the bill off the wall and took it to the county yamen. During the investigation, the instructor and students insisted that they did not know who wrote the placard. Upon being informed of the event, the Yongzheng emperor was pleased with the instructor's diligence and honesty in reporting the seditious text.[129] The case of the anonymous placard demonstrates the intimate, and often fraught, role county instructors played in dealing with information and provincial intellectual life. Instructors' proximity to students and the educated elite of their home province made them useful personnel for the state's literary projects and enforcers of scholarly orthodoxy. During moments of imperial paranoia over the disposition of the empire's literati and during the massive literary projects of the Qianlong emperor, Qing officials turned to county instructors to implement intellectual policies on the local level. As native provincials familiar with local intellectual circles and literary works that circulated among them, county instructors were sometimes used by the Qing

[129] Jueluo Shilin, memorial of YZ 9/2/10, QPA.

state as agents of intellectual control to eliminate heterodox material, root out anti-Qing literati, and identify seditious literature.

Imperial surveillance of students, instructors, and schools was an innovation of the early Ming dynasty. As shown by Tilemann Grimm, the office of education intendant was devised in 1436. These "officials in control of schools" traveled around the province acting as a kind of censor making sure schools operated appropriately and adhered to regulations, that instructors taught the approved classical curriculum and maintained orthodox rites, and that students dedicated themselves to study and moral cultivation. Ideally, the educational intendant would visit each county school once a year; however, the difficulty of travel within a province made the accomplishment of that goal a rarity. Thus, inspections were only superficial. Nonetheless, the efforts of the educational intendant office did promote a degree of standardization in the educational curriculum, rites, and form and content of examination essays. The succeeding Qing dynasty continued to use educational intendants to oversee and manage educational matters in each province.[130]

Despite this overarching bureaucratic apparatus, county instructors performed the actual everyday surveillance of students and their curricula. Keeping students aligned with orthodox doctrines was an essential function of the instructor's job. One case in Shanxi province demonstrates how perceived laxity in instructor supervision could land the county educational establishment in trouble. In the late Qianlong period, Meng Ercong, a *shengyuan* in Fengtai County was accused of befriending a bandit woman (*feifu*) from whom he learned an unnamed heterodox doctrine. The magistrate reported that Meng took vegetarian meals, made offerings to the Buddha, and tried to beguile the county residents with his undefined heterodoxy. Testimony

[130] Tilemann Grimm, "Ming Education Intendants," Charles O. Hucker, ed., *Chinese Government in Ming Times: Seven Studies* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969): 129-147, 131-144.

from Meng indicated that not only was he more interested in spreading his beliefs and stirring up the masses than he was in studying, he also was unable to read (at least unable to read texts in the prescribed curriculum). The provincial educational authority recommended that the county instructors be cashiered for not detecting Meng's activities or curbing his unorthodox beliefs.[131] From the perspective of the provincial educational authority, the failure of the Fengtai county instructors to properly supervise and instruct led to Meng's apostasy. The provincial educational authority was concerned about the effect Meng and his heterodox beliefs could have on the county's residents. The instructors' failure to properly supervise Meng thus had implications for the rest of the county and its customs.

Due to cases like that of Meng Ercong, the Qing government fretted about what happened behind the closed doors of local schools. From early in the Qing reign, the state was preoccupied with controlling the political and intellectual energies of literati and students. The Sacred Edict of the Kangxi emperor issued in 1685 commanded students to commit themselves to orthodox learning and avoid heterodox ideas.[132] Afterwards, the Yongzheng emperor issued an edict requiring county school instructors to lead their students in a monthly recitation of the Sacred Edict in order to drive the message home through constant repetition. In order to dissuade schools from becoming centers of political activism or hotbeds of unorthodox intellectual experimentation, each school and academy was required to house tablets forbidding students (among other stipulations) to form associations, publish their private writings, or argue with their teachers.[133] From the Kangxi to the Qianlong eras, the emperors routinely issued edicts

131 Chen Songqing, memorial of JQ 18/12/15, MQA.

132 Ibid.

133 Alexander Woodside, "State, Scholars, and Orthodoxy: The Qing Academies, 1736-1839," In *Orthodoxy in Late Imperial China*, ed., Kwang-Ching Liu, ed., (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990): 158-184, 166; R. Kent Guy, *The Emperor's Four Treasuries: Scholars and the State in the Late Ch'ien-lung Era* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), 18; Xiao, 241.

condemning illicit student behavior in order to channel the thwarted ambitions of unsuccessful literati away from political action.[134] With so much imperial emphasis on controlling student behavior and intellectual content, the emperors of the first half of the Qing betrayed a deep insecurity over the regime's acceptance amongst the literati.

During sensitive political moments, scholars were most at risk of provoking state scrutiny. The reign of the Yongzheng emperor was particularly marked by crackdowns on individual literati or literary associations perceived to be critical of the emperor. R. Kent Guy attributes the Yongzheng emperor's suspicion of scholars to the intense literati factionalism of the late Kangxi era, in which some scholars who received imperial patronage in Beijing engaged in political maneuverings to support one or another of Yongzheng's rivals for the throne. To prevent literati meddling in imperial politics, Yongzheng cut the numbers of literati employed in the Hanlin Academy and reduced patronage of individual scholars in favor of stipends given to students in official academies; he also revamped the Ming dynasty's system of educational intendants by personally selecting "government school inspectors" (*xuezheng*) who supervised provincial schools, students, and instructors in an attempt to bring their activities under imperial purview.[135] As the Yongzheng emperor increasingly regularized educational life of the empire, he also cracked down on politically wayward literati in the provinces.

In 1726, the Yongzheng emperor persecuted Wang Jingqi and Cha Siting, two literati from Zhejiang whose writings appeared to be seditious. Wang was rounded up as part of the investigation of Nian Gengyao (1679-1726), whose staff he hoped to join in 1724. Investigators discovered in Wang's writings sections critical of contemporary Qing officials and the Kangxi

134 Xiao, 242-243.
135 Guy, 23-24.

emperor, and other passages were interpreted as encouragement for Nian to revolt.[136] Cha was a metropolitan official sent to conduct the *juren* examination in Jiangxi. One of the topics he chose for the examination included characters that resembled the characters of "Yongzheng," only with the top sections removed, which investigators interpreted as a subversive call for the emperor's decapitation.[137] After Wang was executed and as Cha languished in prison, the Yongzheng emperor, perhaps recalling the case of Lü Liuliang (1629-1683) a Zhejiang literatus whose writings attacking Manchus influenced a poor scholar named Zeng Jing to attempt an overthrow of the emperor, stewed over their cases and the wayward tendencies of Zhejiang literati.[138] In an edict, he denounced students' moral laxity, and their corrupting influence on customs and local society. Notably, he blamed educational officials for the sorry state of scholars' moral fitness, declaring that educational officials were old and lazy, and their ranks filled with middling talents. Greedy for money and status, they masked their wayward ways and bad habits under the guise of preparing students for the examinations. With models such as these, the emperor mused, how could students not be corrupted? In order to rectify the practices of instructors and their charges, the provincial educational authorities needed to exert greater oversight over the instructors, and remove those lacking in energy and moral vigor.[139] From the emperor's point of view, stricter bureaucratic control was needed to discipline the ranks of county instructors and thereby improve the moral quality of the empire's students, and prevent scholars from dabbling in and spreading politically sensitive literature.

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136 Hummel, 813.

137 Hummel, 22.

138 For a narrative history of the Zeng Jing case and its aftermath, see, Jonathan Spence, *Treason by the Book* (New York: Viking, 2001).

139 *Da Qing Shizong xian (Yongzheng) huangdi shilu*, Vol. 2 (Taipei: Taiwanhua shuwenju zongfaxing, 1964), 742b.

In contrast to the emperor's dim views of instructors, other provincial officials argued that county instructors could be used to more effectively control students and exert greater oversight over students' literary consumption. In a memorial to the throne, Zhu Wang, the provincial treasurer of Hunan, echoed the emperor's views on the morally corrupt nature of students, and agreed that they exerted a baleful influence on the customs of commoners in that province as well. Like the emperor, he identified the county instructor as an official who influenced the habits of local students. Unlike the emperor, however, Zhu approached the issue less as an ethical problem than as a structural problem: instructors were charged with preparing students for the examinations, and not fundamentally concerned with their moral cultivation. The measure of success for a county instructor was contingent on their students' success in the examinations, not whether they were moral individuals. "Affairs of the county" were not the purview of the instructor, yet instructors were still held responsible for students' behavior and activities outside the school.

Zhu implied that if county instructors wielded more power over their students, taught outside the narrow confines of the examination, and exerted more control over educational life—and by extension, educated elites—in the county, reform of local life would naturally occur. In short, Zhu advocated the empowerment of county instructors to control students and to teach beyond the purposes of examination preparation. Whereas the emperor sought out a bureaucratic solution to an ethical problem, Zhu sought an ethical solution to a structural problem. The emperor, however, was unimpressed. Rejecting Zhu's assertion that the quality of educated elites in his province was worse than those in Zhejiang ("*They can't be as bad as that*!"), the emperor asserted that Zhu's prescriptions would be impractical from a policy perspective.[140] Given the

[140] Zhu Gang, memorial of YZ 4/11/17, QPA.

emperor's low opinion of county instructors as talentless parasites and his drive to regularize Qing administration and law, such a proposal was unlikely to be met with imperial approval.

Years later, during the Qianlong reign, the state took advantage of county instructors' local connections and affiliations in order to obtain books for the massive *Siku quanshu* project. Embarking upon his literary project, the Qianlong emperor became frustrated with insufficient numbers of texts being turned over for imperial perusal, particularly those containing politically sensitive content. A part of the problem was that the project banned county yamen clerks and runners (who were local and reviled) from collecting texts to prevent them from extorting commoners. Officials did not know which families possessed valuable or illicit texts. In order to find effective agents to seek books, the governor-general of Huguang decided to use expectant county instructors to seek out texts from local families. Instructors had the advantage of being part of the provincial bureaucratic apparatus, but more importantly, as members of the provincial educated elite who spent years studying in local schools and academies, they knew who possessed valuable—or deviant—texts. Therefore, the governor-general ordered expectant-instructors proceed to their home areas to seek out texts or persuade families who possessed texts to hand them over to a familiar—and perhaps less intimidating—local face. By way of incentive, the expectant instructors who collected many texts would find their names at the top of the list for educational posts; those who collected the fewest would find their names at the bottom.[141] Beginning in Zhejiang, the policy was emulated in other provinces. Ranking officials recognized the policy as an efficacious method to obtain texts in a less threatening way. By sending

[141] Luther Carrington Goodrich, *The Literary Inquisition of Ch'ien-lung* (Baltimore: Waverly Press, 1935), 39.

educational officials back to their home areas to seek out texts from local families and friends, officials began to obtain more titles and with fewer disturbances to locals.[142]

The provincial connections of county instructors made them adroit agents of educational and literary control on the local level. They oversaw county *shengyuan*, promoted orthodox curricula, and exposed the creep of heterodox ideas into local educational life. Their local connections also made them useful agents of literary control for the state (or a cause of imperial anxiety in the case of the Yongzheng emperor). Besides their watchdog function over local students, county instructors knew the educated elites of their home province and were acquainted with the contents of their private libraries. The success of the Qianlong emperor's *Siku quanshu* project was predicated upon the efforts of expectant county instructors to discover important or proscribed texts possessed by their provincial scholarly community. As the High Qing faded and the governing challenges of the 19th century emerged, instructors' informal roles and local connections became more important to maintain the Qing's local control during times of upheaval and rebellion.

Organizing Local Defense

Late imperial China was a dangerous place. Studies have shown that despite a normative abhorrence of violence reflected in elite literati culture, China was at least as violent as other contemporaneous societies, and perhaps much more violent.[143] Rooted in in unequal economic relationships, social tensions, and popular religion among other phenomena, violence in China found expression through a wide range of practices like lineage feuding, ethnic violence,

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142 Jueluo Bayan, memorial of QL 42/9/24, QPA; Zhou Yuanli, memorial of QL 42/9/7, QPA.

143 William T. Rowe, *Crimson Rain: Seven Centuries of Violence in a Chinese County* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 3.

banditry, and large armed conflicts and rebellion.[144] Moreover, instances of violent disturbances may have actually increased after the mid-Qing period as increasing population pressure drove impoverished people to the margins of the law to engage in violent pursuits as a survival strategy.[145] The distribution of county instructors throughout every county made them vulnerable to physical danger during violent affrays. Yet, due to their dispersion within each county and their nominal status as bureaucratic functionaries, county instructors frequently organized local defenses during disturbances. In times of duress, county instructors transformed into defensive personnel of last resort, and thereby helped maintain nominal state control..

During periods of violent confrontations and rebellion, county instructors braved the same dangers as other territorial officials and local residents, but their status as educators did not afford them safety. Yet, the government perceived county instructors as local state agents, and therefore took threats to their physical safety or deaths at the hands of ruffians to be a severe offense. In June of 1789, during the aftermath of the Lin Shuangwen Rebellion in Taiwan, for instance, testimony from one of the local rebel leaders led to the identification of the murderer of Ye Mengling (a former Aofeng Academy student) and Chen Longchi, the instructors of Fengshan County. The rebel leader fingered one of his followers, Li You, an impoverished man of 41 *sui* without family or children, as the assassin. For killing the two instructors, Li was sentenced to death.[146]

Even as it punished those who harmed county instructors, agents of the Qing state lauded instructors who defended their county from marauders. For instance, Fukang'an, the commander of the Qing forces who crushed the Lin Shuangwen Rebellion, commended an instructor named

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144 See, Jonathan N. Lipman and Stevan Harrell, eds., *Violence in China: Essays in Culture and Counterculture* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990).
145 Robert J. Antony, *Unruly People: Crime, Community, and State in Late Imperial South China* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2016), 15.
146 Kuilin and Wan Zhong, memorial of QL 54/5/13, QPA.

Jiang Hao for his efforts to organize local resistance in Jiayi County and for sustaining injuries in battles with the rebels.[147] More than a century in later in 1902, Yuan Shikai, then governor-general of Zhili, extolled a county instructor in a memorial to the throne during the aftermath of the Boxer Rebellion. In Yuan's account, Li Yue, the 70-*sui* instructor of Lingshou County flew into a rage when foreign soldiers occupied the school and burned the spirit tablets housed within. Cursing and attempting to block the invaders, he was beaten to death. Yuan commended the loyalty of Li and the county magistrate who had thrown himself into a well and recommended that they receive sacrifices in the county Manifest Loyalty shrine.[148]

Official commendation of county instructors who organized defenses, like Yuan Shikai's exaltation of Li Yue, frequently emphasized that the educators bore no formal responsibility for the protection of their locality (*wu shou tu zhi ze* / *wu difang zhi ze*). Their lack of defensive responsibilities combined with their duties to educate local students (a *wen* pursuit) contrasted dramatically with their emergency assumption of martial (*wu*) roles. The county instructor's latent martial function became especially apparent in periods of acute military crisis. During the Taiping Rebellion (1850-1864), county instructors became heavily involved in organizing *tuanlian* (local militia) organizations. Initially pioneered during the early 19th century White Lotus Rebellion, *tuanlian* organizations were typically led by a lower-degree holder or local gentry who could assemble the people in his locality across class-lines for the purpose of mutual defense.[149] As the Taiping Rebellion progressed, the dispersal of instructors within each county, their status as degree-holding elites, their position as fellow provincials, and ostensible connection to the Qing governing structure made them ideal figures to organize *tuanlian*

147 Unknown, memorial of QL 53/5/2, QPA.
148 Yuan Shikai, memorial of GX 28/5/28, QPA.
149 Philip A. Kuhn, *Rebellion and Its Enemies in Late Imperial China: Militarization and Social Structure, 1796-1864* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), 61, 66.

organizations. In the summer of 1855, the governor of Anhui recognized a county instructor for organizing a *tuanlian* organization and for his efforts in holding off rebels and training local braves, despite "not being responsible for [local defense]."[150] The following year, the acting-governor of Huguang extolled a county instructor and two local students for assembling a *tuanlian* organization and making generous contributions of money to local defense. He then recommended that the instructor be promoted to the rank of magistrate, and the two students promoted to assistant county instructors (*xundao*).[151] As local elites and degree holders, a county instructor might even be more valuable to the defense of his home area than as a teacher in another county. In 1855, the governor of Zhejiang memorialized the throne to request that Zheng Xianyu, the newly chosen instructor of Suichang County, delay his departure in order to continue his work in managing a local *tuanlian* organization in his home prefecture.[152] These cases demonstrate that Qing territorial officials readily apprehended the value of county instructors in organizing and leading local defenses during military emergencies. As low-ranking bureaucrats and provincial natives, county instructors could transform into military personnel of last resort and serve both state and local defense interests.

In addition to organizing local defenses during times of emergency, county instructors also strategized independently on pressing military affairs. Chen Jincheng (1802-1852) was one such example. Born the son of a tutor in coastal Hui'an County in the south of Fujian, Chen was a promising student and studied at the Qingyuan Academy under the headship of Chen Shouqi, a former Aofeng Academy student and future Aofeng Academy head. In his days as a student, Chen traveled to Beijing with his father-in-law, the scholar, Sun Jingshi, where he lectured on

150 Governor of Anhui, memorial of XF 5/7/13, QPA.
151 Acting-governor of Huguang, memorial of XF 6/4/29, QPA.
152 Governor of Zhejiang, memorial of XF 5/5/10, QPA.

the Book of Changes at the Quanzhou travel lodge. Later on in 1838, Chen was selected to become the county instructor of Gutian and Liancheng counties, and was employed as a county instructor when the Opium War broke out the following year.[153]

As Chen followed the trajectory of the war with the British, he wrote a detailed plan for the defense of Fuzhou. Chen envisioned a deeply localist vision in which Fuzhou residents, provided with a little training, shouldered the duties of the city's defense. Once organized into staggered *tuanlian* units guarding strategic areas around Fuzhou and the mouth of the Min River, locals would provide the backbone of the Fuzhou defensive structure and play supportive roles for the professional soldiers. Claiming his ideas stemmed from theories articulated by the famed Ming pirate-fighter, Qi Jiguang, and Zheng Zhilong, the founder of a powerful maritime confederation during the Ming-Qing transition and father of Zheng Chenggong, as well as contemporary events in Sanyuanli in neighboring Guangdong, Chen perceived that strong and cohesive local organization would beat this new maritime threat. Besides providing tactical plans for Fuzhou's defense, Chen's treatise also waded into wider strategic circles by theorizing about the nature of the British and the necessity to thrash them militarily before any peace settlement could be reached, implicitly criticizing Qing court factions eager to negotiate an end to the war.[154]

Motivated as Chen was, how could he, a mere county instructor placed at the bottom rung of a vast bureaucratic machinery, hope to disseminate his plan among official circles in order to put it into action? Relying on normative bureaucratic connections would certainly condemn his plan to obscurity. Yet, through an extensive informal network of educated Fujian elites, the county instructor was connected to powerful men outside of official channels. Therefore, in order

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153 Chen Jincheng, "Preface," *Yiyitang wenji* (Fuzhou, 1886).
154 Chen Jincheng, "Chou shou Fuzhou yi," *Fuzhou tuanlian jishi* (Fuzhou, 1843).

to draw attention to his ideas, Chen relied on his academy connections and its well-placed alumni. Chen turned to a classmate from his days at the Qingyuan Academy, Su Tingyu. Su had enjoyed a distinguished official career, occupying numerous posts in the territorial bureaucracy and eventually becoming the acting governor-general of Sichuan. Reading Chen's plan, Su declared it to be "the Great Wall of Fujian," and sent the draft on to Yiliang, who became the new governor-general of Fujian and Zhejiang in 1842.[155] Luckily for Chen and Su, Yiliang shared their drive to confront the British militarily. Previously in 1838, Yiliang served as the governor of Guangdong. He was a strong supporter of Lin Zexu and his uncompromising anti-opium stance, and together he and Lin carried out the opium embargo and expelled British ships from Guangzhou. In 1841, Yiliang maintained his hardline stance against Qing peace overtures, and brought about the downfall of Qishan by reporting to the court the terms of the agreement which ceded Hong Kong to the British.[156] After Su consulted with him, Yiliang enthusiastically endorsed Chen's plan, and ordered the instructor to proceed to the Fuzhou area to organize and train a local defense force. Heeding Yiliang's endorsement, Chen hurried to his new post laden with locally raised funds and accompanied by his band of local followers, five blacksmiths, two bullet makers, and twelve sharpshooters from his native Quanzhou.[157]

The war ended as Chen arrived in Fuzhou. The close of the conflict came as a shock, forcing Chen to deal with the humiliating defeat. His disappointment over missing the opportunity to organize Fuzhou's local defenses was matched by his disgust with the peace settlement and his sorrow over the loss of high-ranking Fujian military personnel. After the war, Chen was promoted to an official post in Yunnan, but he channeled his rage and despair into

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155 Ibid.

156 Hummel, 389.

157 Chen Jinsheng, "Zhan dan," *Fuzhou tuanlian jishi*.

political writings on the impact of the war and its settlement for the remainder of his life. First, he wrote essays commemorating deceased Fujian naval commanders, including a Taiwanese veteran of the Jiaqing-era pirate campaigns who had died of illness and old age in Penghu before he could fight the British. Chen was even more effusive over the combat death of Chen Huacheng, a high-ranking naval commander from the instructor's native Quanzhou in southern Fujian. In an act of historical parallelism, Chen compared the dead general to the famous Li Changgeng, the Fujianese commander-in-chief during the Jiaqing-era pirate raids, whose death during a sea battle a few decades before cemented his legacy among activist literati for his commitment to duty under intense official antagonism.[158] Clearly, Chen wanted to emphasize the historical legacy of Fujianese guarding the maritime frontier, which had emerged as site of increasing importance and instability for the Qing since the early 19th century. Second, Chen was incensed at what he saw to be Fujian's raw deal in the terms of the Qing-British peace treaty. As part of the treaty, five ports were opened to British trade, two of which were located in Fujian at Fuzhou and Xiamen. Chen therefore believed that Fujian was unfairly shouldering the burden of a new and insulting system and argued in several essays to remove Fuzhou as a treaty port, leaving only Xiamen open to British trade in the province. Chen's understanding of the province's strategic geography and Fuzhou's pivotal position within it informed his preference that Xiamen become the sole treaty port in Fujian. Monitoring events in Fujian from Beijing in 1844, Chen watched with trepidation as the British established themselves in Fuzhou and heard reports detailing how the foreigners were building a tower on the high peak of Wushi Mountain overlooking the city.[159] Finally, Chen was horrified over the expansion of British infrastructure in Shanghai. When returning home to Fujian from Beijing in 1850, Chen stopped in Shanghai

158 Chen Jinsheng, "Ping yi lun shang," *Yiyitang wenji*..
159 Chen Jinsheng, "Luewen," *Jiyou siji* (Fuzhou).

amid an outcry against a planned British road cutting through fields and gravesites. Local officials, caught between British requests and local protests, did not know how to respond. Therefore, Chen helped organize local protestors, compelling the British to cancel the planned road.[160] Clearly, Chen's postwar years were marked by his transformation from local educational functionary to activist.

County instructors in late imperial China continually faced the possibility of impromptu military service. Their spatial diffusion throughout the empire and proximity to local disturbances transformed them into commanders and military organizers of last resort, particularly during the disturbances of the mid-19th century. Instructors' twin identities as low-level educational bureaucrats and provincial natives made them figures acceptable to officials and locals who could provide a state-organized local defense force, namely in the establishment of *tuanlian* units. As in the case of Chen Jincheng, instructors could even devise grand strategies during major conflicts. Although he was a lowly instructor, Chen marshaled significant local resources in order to put his ideas into action. By putting his ideas into print, leveraging his academy connections with fellow alumni, and emphasizing his status as a self-proclaimed local expert, he won the support of high-ranking officials necessary to implement his military plan for Fuzhou. Ironically, through Chen's embrace of his Fujian identity and manipulation of local resources, he provided an urgent military service for the central state. Chen's trajectory also demonstrates how his passionate participation in local defenses informed his postwar incarnation as an activist who wrote political essays arguing against the terms of the peace treaty with the British. Instructors' bureaucratic status, provincial identity, and ability to marshal local resources

[160] Chen Jinsheng, *Yiyitang wenji* (manuscript).

in the service of local issues provided for avenues for them to become activists as the Qing's governing capacity waned in the early 19th century.

The Making of an Activist: The Case of Lin Yuhua

The education and local orientation of county instructors posed risks for agents of the imperial government. In instances of corruption or other malfeasance, zealous instructors could attempt to embarrass local officials by calling attention to their abuse of power. One such instructor was Lin Yuhua. His famous run-in with a corrupt local official and his subsequent punishment made him into a celebrity in Fuzhou literary circles in the early 19th century. Lin's exploits against official corruption and his concerns over pressing problems affecting Fujian's maritime frontier transformed him into a political commentator and local activist.

Lin, a native of Min county (Fuzhou), won the *juren* degree in 1768. Thereafter, he served as a county instructor in nearby Ningde county in north coastal Fujian.[161] While working in that position, Lin fell afoul of local Qing officials and was thrown in jail. The particulars of his fall from grace are not entirely clear. According to his own account, a cashiered student named Lin Fangjie bore a grudge against him. The student's brother-in-law wrote an accusation that claimed Lin Yuhua failed to maintain order among his students, who were running amok and stealing. The magistrate ignored the accusation, so the student next bribed the local prefect to investigate Lin and charge him with crimes.[162] Other accounts suggest something more dramatic was occurring behind the scenes: two lineages, the Lins and Xues of Changtai county, were engaged in *xiedou* (communal feuding), and one of the lineages bribed Qing officials were bribed to support their claims. When Lin Yuhua heard about the details, he took advantage of the

[161] *Fujian Tongji*, ed., Fujian tongzhi ju (Taipei: Taiwan datong shuju, 1968), 2551.
[162] Lin Yuhua, "Bianhuo," *Guwen chuji* (Denghua canghu ban, 1830). Lin's account matches his biography in *Fujian tongji*.

Lantern Festival after the New Year to make several lanterns inscribed with a poem mocking the corrupt officials. The officials, incensed, persuaded the aforementioned student to file a charge against the instructor, and the prefect of Fuzhou then threw him in jail. Whatever the exact circumstances, all accounts include the themes of "false charges" filed against Lin and "corrupt officials" plotting to bring the instructor down.

Lin's punishment was severe: after three months in jail, he was exiled to Xinjiang.[163] Once there, the military governor hired him to manage local schools where he promoted *lixue* studies. Three years later in 1797, Lin was pardoned and returned to Fujian from exile. Upon his return to Fujian, he composed a poem mocking the prefect who imprisoned him, and then recorded his travails in *guwen*-style essays.[164] His writings were collected, circulated, commented upon by educated elite of Fuzhou, and eventually published. Lin's experiences and writings made the instructor into something of a local celebrity renowned for his refusal to admit guilt despite intense pressure from corrupt local officials. In one essay he recounted an extended conversation with the jailer detailing his moral qualms over whether to falsely admit guilt and thereby secure release.[165] In another essay, he detailed his interrogation by the prefect:

> I had been imprisoned for seven months, but then it seemed I was about to be released. I was next taken to the prefect's yamen.
> The prefect asked, "Have you done much reading in jail?"
> I responded, "It's true that I've had some difficulties with that, but if I don't read, what does it matter?"
> He asked, "You haven't admitted your guilt. How about today?"
> I said, "You can find any excuse to punish me more. Go ahead and torture me."
> He pointed to a wooden cage and said, "Please sit here."
> I said, "*I am an educational official*. I am not a bandit; I'm not a rebel. How can you cage me?"

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163 Interestingly, between 1758 and 1820 the vast majority of disgraced civil and military officials exiled to Xinjiang were from Fujian and Taiwan, likely due to the Lin Shuangwen Rebellion in Taiwan and constant lineage and subethnic feuding. See Johanna Waley-Cohen, *Exile in Mid-Qing China: Banishment to Xinjiang, 1758-1820* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 91-94.

164 Lin Yuhua, "Bianhuo," *Guwen chuji*.

165 Ibid.

> In the end, I was forced inside. The cage was small and narrow, and the door was locked tight. I could just barely breathe. As I was being pulled away, I shouted, "Even if you want to kill me, I am innocent!"
> They ignored me and took me away. As we went out through the west gate, I continued to shout about the injustice.[166] (Italics mine)

In his account, Lin reiterated his defiant resistance to official pressure to confess. By emphasizing his status as an educational official (county instructor) and detailing his morally reasoned refusal to confess to trumped-up charges, he drew a sharp contrast with the powerful and morally corrupt officials persecuting him. He continued his account of moral martyrdom by describing how, still locked in the cage, he was placed aboard a ship to be sent to another location. While on board, Lin was harassed by men he assumed were hired to murder him. Going on a hunger strike for fear of poisoned food, he threatened to lodge a lawsuit against his tormentors in heaven as an angry ghost. He managed to stave off disaster until his cage was taken ashore where his shouts alerted passersby who then notified some of his relatives to escort him to safety.[167]

With his moral credentials proven by danger and exile, Lin returned to Fuzhou as an incisive commentator on problems afflicting Fujian. As an educated elite, Lin was of course concerned about the moral condition of his fellow Fujianese, singling out the practice of cremation as a particularly evil custom.[168] More pressing, however, was the explosion of piracy during the early Jiaqing reign and Fujian's vulnerability to famine. In 1807, Lin drafted a policy to blunt the pirate threat by compelling brigand leaders to surrender in return for rewards and rank in order to induce dissention among their ranks.[169] At that time, the Qing efforts against the

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166 Lin Yuhua, "Qiantu beihai jilue," *Guwen chuji*.
167 Ibid.
168 Lin Yuhua, "Jie huozang wen," *Guwen chuji*.
169 Lin Yuhua, "Ni pinghai ce," *Guwen chuji*.

pirate fleets were not going well. While the complexity of the administrative geography of the southern coasts made a coordinated response by a weak and undermanned naval force nearly impossible, ranking officials sent to fight the pirates disagreed among themselves and with the Jiaqing emperor on how best to confront the pirate threat.[170] The emperor and many other officials wanted to use the Qing naval forces to wage an aggressive sea war in the hopes of defeating and exterminating the pirate fleets, but others were dubious about the navy's ability to defeat skilled and well-equipped pirate fleets, arguing that even if the navy won a few engagements, it could not ultimately eradicate the massive numbers of pirates and their ships. Nanyacheng, appointed governor-general of Guangdong in 1804, used a new strategy first devised by Yan Ruyi to combat White Lotus rebels in the Hunan highlands, which de-emphasized offensive warfare and focused instead on defense, community mobilization, and mass clemency.[171]

While it is unclear if Lin was aware of the debates among officials and the throne, it is likely that he would have been aware of the see-saw nature of Qing policy towards pirate suppression as it veered from aggressive sea war, prosecuted in large part by the Fujian navy, to local defensive organization.[172] Examining the situation, Lin all but declared a military solution hopeless: with the pirates' ability to hide on the high seas, fighting and retreating at will, and possessing the ability to resupply along the vast coastline, the Qing forces exhausted themselves chasing the brigands up and down the littoral, unable to trap their fleets in a decisive engagement. He declared that the defeat of the pirates would be even more difficult than the pacification of the Miao by the legendary Yu the Great, perhaps a sly reference to the arduous

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170 Dian Murray, *Pirates of the South China Coast, 1790-1810* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987), 99-136.
171 Daniel McMahon, "Qing Highland Precedent, Yan Ruyi, and the Defense of the Guangdong Coast, 1804-1805," *Asia Major*, Third Series, Vol. 23, No. 2 (2010): 1-32.
172 In a separate poem, Lin stated his dissatisfaction with Li Changgeng and other naval commanders, preferring an unnamed strategy of his own devising to combat the pirates. *Si ping haikou*, in *Shi gushi chuji*.

suppression campaigns against the Miao in Hunan only a few years before. Instead of fighting the pirates in naval engagements—as the Qing had been doing for a decade by that point—Lin proposed that the government should actively induce pirate leaders to surrender with their followers. After surrendering, the former pirates would be treated leniently and encouraged to pursue a peaceful livelihood, presumably agriculture. The instructor found a historical precedent for his policy during the reign of Emperor Xuan of the Han dynasty (r. 74-49 BCE): during an outbreak of piracy in the Bohai Sea, the imperial forces made little headway in combat with the pirates, perturbing the emperor. Only with the introduction of an official named Gong Sui who saw the pirates not as a military problem, but as an economic problem to be rectified by benevolent government, were the pirates finally suppressed. In Lin's telling, Gong fired the officials charged with capturing pirates, and instead induced the brigands to surrender by settling them on the land and providing them with agricultural implements.[173] Though Lin may have understood this historical episode to be apocryphal, it underscores his belief that the root of the pirate crisis was fundamentally an economic issue, and could only be solved by addressing the problem of livelihood, especially for many impoverished Fujianese who treated piracy as a part-time occupation to supplement their income.

Indeed, Lin, like many other Fujianese educated elites, frequently expressed anxiety over the economy, rice supply, and effect of natural disasters upon his province's agricultural scene. Cycles of drought, poor harvest, and exploding rice prices fed inter-lineage warfare and petty piracy along Fujian's coasts, while non-native officials unfamiliar with the peculiar natural and human ecology of the province attempted ineffective relief efforts. In one instance of drought and rice shortage, Lin addressed a letter to the prefect of Quanzhou. In the missive, Lin laid out

[173] Lin Yuhua, "Ni pinghai ce," in *Guwen chuji*.

the recent history of Fujian's droughts and the mistakes of previous officials, described the effects of a rice shortage as it spread through Fujian's cities and into the countryside, and finally offered a proposal to distribute grain in the public granaries before speculation and deep shortages triggered riots.[174] Lin's delineation of the problem and its history underscores his preoccupation with the fragility of Fujian's economy and its social effects, compelling him to voice his thoughts with the prefect. As Lin wrote the letter, he remained sensitive about his lowly status as an instructor, asking rhetorically, "How can an educational official exceed the bounds of his station to comment upon such matters?" Counting on the prefect's reputation for modesty and receptivity, Lin also alluded to Mencius and his predilection for speaking frankly to kings.[175] Apparently, Lin assumed that the similarly educated prefect would understand his message to look beyond the bounds of status and position to the salience and sincerity of advice, no matter its origins. Thus, a lowly county instructor could comment upon and offer advice to officials on pressing local problems.

Lin Yuhua did not observe and write about pressing issues afflicting his province in isolation. He achieved relevance by means of his associations with eminent Fujian elites and the circulation and publication of his writings. At the height of the pirate crisis in 1806, Lin helped form a small group called the *zhenshuaihui* 真率會, or the "Sincere and Forthright Society," which met several times a month to discuss texts from the remote past to the present day.[176] Many members of this society were alumni of the Aofeng Academy, including a cousin of the instructor who published his own collection of statecraft writings. Lin Yuhua's uncompromising stand with a corrupt official and his drive to solve problems afflicting Fujian ranging from the

174 Lin Yuhua, "Shang Yang Supu fangbo shu," *Guwen chuji*.
175 Ibid.
176 Lai, 51.

pirate crisis to rice shortages made him a favorite in Aofeng circles, whose members circulated and commented upon his writings. In 1830, Lin published his collection of *guwen*-style essays and poetry with accompanying prefaces and commentary written by prominent Aofeng members. These included Zheng Guangce the former academy head preoccupied by Fujian's maritime problems, and the eminent officials and Aofeng members, Liang Zhangju and Chen Ruolin. Perhaps the most famed Aofeng alumnus, Lin Zexu, whose father was a founding member of the Sincere and Forthright Society and brought his son to their gatherings as a young man, remembered the old instructor in a preface. The anti-opium crusader recalled the outrage over Lin's persecution as a child and admired his commitment to teaching and devotion to practical affairs as a young man.[177]

Lin Yuhua appears to have deliberately fashioned himself as an activist. After his return from exile in Xinjiang, the instructor wrote about his suffering at the hands of corrupt local officials to create a gripping read for his admirers. Certainly, Lin's narrative had a performative quality, and it allowed him to establish his moral authority as an observer and commentator on local issues. His uncompromising personality, status as a Fuzhou celebrity, and interest in Fujian affairs afforded him entry into local literary societies of like-minded elites. These societies composed of Aofeng Academy heads and students met regularly, circulated their writings, and discussed the state of current affairs. Like Lin, they also put their ideas on reforming the province into print and leveraged their connections order to influence officials as Fujian faced mounting pressures on its maritime littoral. With his established moral credentials and the support of provincial educated elites, Lin Yuhua the instructor therefore articulated his own thoughts on maritime affairs and proffered advice to officials on how to manage them.

[177] Lin Yuhua, "preface," *Guwen chuji*.

Conclusion: Putting Learning into Practice

In gazetteers such as the *Fujian tongji*, there is a section of biographies of scholars titled, "Confucians who put learning into practice" (*ruxing* 儒行). The individuals included within this section are celebrated less for their scholastic accomplishments than for their tangible achievements on the ground. Many of them belong to the ranks of county instructors; the biographies detail their practical efforts to deal with local problems like quelling unruly students, mediating disputes, renovating county infrastructure, and fighting pirates. Theirs was a muscular, results-oriented brand of Confucianism. Indeed, a good instructor needed to possess an action-oriented personality that obligated him to take on many roles in navigating the complexities of county social life. This chapter has shown that instructors performed essential services for the state and locality by controlling students, monitoring literary life, and sacrificing in local shrines. It also demonstrates the significance of subcounty personnel in the inner workings of county administration and their mediating functions between state and local society.[178]

The gazetteer section of *ruxing* biographies also indicates a turn in the activities of county instructors beginning in the 19th century. Not only were instructors celebrated for improving affairs in their county, but they also started to become more proactive in confronting challenges faced by the province itself, like managing affairs on the maritime frontier, confronting corrupt officials, and heading defensive forces—activities not typically associated with instructors in the early Qing. Thus, instructors like Chen Jincheng and Lin Yuhua were feted as "Confucians who put learning into practice" as Fujian confronted new maritime and natural threats. County instructors in the Qing always possessed significant local resources, particularly in terms of their ties to the educated elite of their province and their academy networks. But it appears that, in the

[178] See, Bradley Reed, *Talons and Teeth: County Clerks and Runners in the Qing Dynasty* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000).

case of Fujian at least, county officials increasingly marshaled their local resources in the greater service of the province and state beginning in the early 19th century. This coincided with the diminished governing capacity of the central state. Against the backdrop of the Qing empire's shifting political orientation, it was the county instructors as intellectual activists who assumed new roles to press for local and provincial reforms. In the following chapter, we will see how two county instructors used the resources of the Aofeng Academy to remake the maritime frontier and re-establish an orthodox order in a violent social milieu.

CHAPTER THREE

Inside Information: The Case of Two County Instructors in Early Nineteenth-Century Fujian and Taiwan[179]

In the spring of 1807, Zheng Jiancai shocked his friends and patrons. Zheng, who had won distinction for defending Taiwan county (Tainan) from a massive pirate incursion while serving as a lowly county instructor, had declined a promotion to the post of magistrate in Jiangxi. Zheng preferred to remain an instructor in Fujian or Taiwan instead. Zheng's friends were perplexed. Why would Zheng, an educated degree winner who had lived among the elite of the Qing Empire in Beijing, and who had written constantly about administration and defense choose to decline an opportunity to wield real power, and instead continue in his capacity as a minor sub-county functionary? Zheng, however, had a different perspective. He argued that it was in fact due to his position as a county instructor, unburdened by strict oversight and unencumbered with administrative responsibilities, that allowed him to observe larger forces at work and compelled him to achieve practical changes on the ground. As a magistrate in Jiangxi, he would be little more than an administrative drudge unable to accomplish a real difference, but as a county instructor operating in his home province he could style himself as a local expert to achieve tangible changes. Zheng knew that by becoming an expert on local affairs, compiling local information, and deftly managing local levers of influence, he could affect affairs in his home province, and exercise a level of influence far beyond that of a mere county magistrate.[180]

This chapter examines the activities and writings of Zheng Jiancai and Xie Jinluan, two county instructors serving in posts in Fujian and Taiwan over the course of the Jiaqing reign. As they took up educational posts on the island of Taiwan, massive pirate fleets attacked the coasts,

[179] A version of this chapter appears in John R. Bandy, "Information and Local Activism: The Case of Two County Instructors in Early Nineteenth-Century Fujian and Taiwan," *Frontiers of History in China* 14.1 (2019): 51-81.
[180] Zheng Jiancai, "Yu Wang Kongtong," *Liuting wenji* (Taiwan, Daoguang edition).

vexing Qing officials and military. This event served as a call to action of sorts, compelling the two instructors to assume the mantle of local activists. Theirs was an activism realized through the production and strategic dissemination of information: writing treatises and allying with the Aofeng Academy's national network of Fujianese scholars and officials to publish and spread their proposals, Zheng and Xie took action where regular Qing officials were unwilling, and embarked upon ambitious campaigns to remake maritime strategy, incorporate new regions of Taiwan into the administrative map, and push for increased autonomy for instructors and students to stabilize local society. The Aofeng Academy played a central role in the transformation of the instructors into local activists by making their proposals acceptable to Qing officials, who increasingly required legitimate sources of information outside bureaucratic channels in order to address local crises. The activism and literary production of the two instructors, and the Aofeng Academy's central role in bridging the gap between local political enterprises and official endorsement, underscores the increased space for local activism through literary production as the high Qing faded and the Jiaqing reign unfolded. The activism of the two instructors in turn set the stage for intensified literati political involvement in the Daoguang reign, and provided models for a new crop of activist scholars with national ambitions on the eve of the Opium War.

The Early Life of Zheng and Xie

The actions of Xie and Zheng can only be understood in their contexts as county instructors and Fujian natives who were educated at the Aofeng Academy. As the high Qing ended and acute problems emerged across the empire, their educational backgrounds and careers

as county instructors allowed the two men to enter the world of local activism, and devise strategies to confront challenges in their home province.

Xie Jinluan was born in the late 1750s in Houguan county 候官縣 just outside of Fuzhou. His father, a *juren*-degree holder, was employed as an assistant magistrate in Jiangsu and county instructor, but left his wife and children impoverished upon his death.[181] His mother died not long after his father, placing young Xie in charge of the household and making him responsible for the care of his younger siblings.[182] His lack of means forced him to adopt an austere lifestyle, which he later turned into a point of pride—in an effort to underscore his own virtue to stand in contrast with other Qing officials, whom he suspected of corruption.

A successful student, Xie later entered the Aofeng Academy where he met his friend and future colleague, Zheng Jiancai. Zheng was born in 1758 as the fourth son of a medicine and *fengshui* enthusiast in the central Fujian county of Dehua, and part of an extended lineage based there.[183] Despite being an enthusiastic student, he did not find academic success until his mid-twenties at the age of 25 *sui* when he passed the county-level exam.[184] A few years later, the governor of Fujian had appropriated extra funds to support students from outside Fuzhou prefecture to attend the Aofeng Academy, and Zheng was invited to attend.[185] While studying at Aofeng, he relied on his older brother for material support, suggesting that Zheng's family was more financially comfortable than Xie's.[186] Zheng was, however, regarded by his relatives as

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181 Xie Jinluan, "Ji kai," *Erwuzhai wenji*. in *Taiwan wenxian huikan*, Vol. 14 (Xiamen: Xiamen University Press, 2004), 15-16.
182 Ibid.
183 Zheng Jiancai, "Jiapuni zhuan," LTWJ.
184 Zheng Xifu, "Zheng Liuting xiansheng nianpu chugao," *Zhongguo lidai renwu nianpu kaolu*, Vol. 17 (Taipei: Taipei Shiwu yinshuguan, 1982) 219.
185 Zheng Xifu, 220.
186 Zheng Jiancai, "San xiong Danxuan jiachuan," LTWJ.

something of a miser who refused to send any money home to his sons or contribute funds to help out with lineage affairs.[187]

In their early studies, the two men evinced a strong passion for *lixue*. Xie was an enthusiastic devotee of early Qing *lixue* scholars—Hu Wei, Gu Donggao, Ren Qiyun, and Fang Bao—and of Kangxi-era *lixue* scholars from Fujian, notably Cai Shiyuan and Lei Hong.[188] Zheng's intellectual models were the late Ming and early Qing *lixue* scholars, Sun Qifeng and Huang Zongxi, as well as the Song scholar, Wu Deng.[189] At Aofeng, both Zheng and Xie further immersed themselves in study, guided by the former official and academy head, Meng Chaoran, yet another renowned *lixue* scholar, former Aofeng student, and favorite of Chen Hongmou.[190] As a result of their intellectual upbringing, Xie Jinluan and Zheng Jiancai scorned scholars who they perceived to be bookworms ignorant of current affairs and sought practical applications for their knowledge.

In order to accomplish real-world results, Zheng and Xie needed more than just intellectual commitment and a penchant for activism. They also needed well-positioned allies. Their entry into the Aofeng Academy was important not only for the education they received at Fujian's preeminent educational institution, but it also because it drew the men into an extended network of alumni who were employed in positions in the central, territorial, and sub-bureaucratic levels of the Qing administration. Such connections would prove to be invaluable when Xie and Zheng drew on the Aofeng network in Fuzhou and Beijing to mobilize officials in support of their causes when they were employed as county instructors. One such connection

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187 Xie Jinluan, *"*Zheng Liuting chao," EWQWJ, 249-252.
188 Xie Jinluan, "Ji kai," EWZWJ, 17-18.
189 Chen Shouqi, "Dai Dehua shenshi qing yi Zheng jiaoyu chongsi xiangxian chengci," *Zuohai wenji*, 413.
190 Liang Zhangju, "Meng Chaoran," in *Guochao chengong yanxing ji er*, ed., Zhou Junfu, Vol. 55 (Mingwen shufu yinxing): 301.

was their classmate, *jinshi*-degree winner, Hanlin academician, and Aofeng Academy head, Chen Shouqi, who would champion their causes in life and had them officially canonized as local worthies after their deaths.

After their years at Aofeng, the trajectories of Xie and Zheng diverged somewhat. Xie was awarded the *juren* degree in 1788, but was not employed as a county instructor until 1801. His experiences during the intervening thirteen-year period remain unclear. In contrast, Zheng spent much of the next decade in Beijing. He was selected to be a tribute student and also traveled to the capital thanks to patrons from among officials he had met during their service in Fujian.[191] While residing in Beijing, he established connections of patronage with other Beijing-based literati, especially Wang Tingzhen, a Hanlin complier, whom he would seek out in the future as a useful contact for his Fujian initiatives.[192] Remaining in the capital for several years, he was presumably supported by his patrons while also continuing to receive assistance from his older brother, even when his family experienced economic hardship during one of Fujian's frequent famines.[193] At the same time, he also supported himself by working as a teacher for the Plain Blue Banner.[194] Zheng's extended residence in Beijing and his network of patrons in the capital appear to demonstrate his ambition to live and work in the capital's cosmopolitan circles. He does seem to have been motivated: after finally winning the *juren* degree at the age of 41 *sui*, he took the metropolitan examination eleven times, failing each attempt. After that, he exchanged his life in the capital among friends based in the Hanlin Academy for a life as a county instructor, navigating the world of local Fujian politics and often braving physical danger with his friend Xie. This position would prove be fortuitous for both men: working as county

191 Zheng Xifu, 221.
192 Zheng Xifu, 222.
193 Zheng Jiancai, "Sanxiong Danxuan jiazhuan," LTWJ.
194 Zheng Xifu, 223.

instructors during the turbulent years of the early Jiaqing period along the maritime frontier allowed the two men to put their ideas into action, enhance the political impact of local voices through their official post, assert themselves in guiding local affairs, and provide models for local activism for a future generation of scholars.

Xie and Zheng became employed as county instructors in Taiwan as mature men in their 40s during the early Jiaqing period just as massive pirate fleets bore down on the island. Facing the crisis, they manipulated their positions as county instructors and status as local Fujianese to agitate for practical solutions to enhance the security of the maritime frontier, becoming local activists in the process.

Bringing Gemalan into the Map

As Zheng Jiancai and Xie Jinluan took up their positions in Taiwanese counties in the first decade of the 19th century, well-organized pirate fleets ravaged the coastline from Guangdong to Zhejiang. Previously, these pirates had provided naval forces for warring Vietnamese factions engaged in civil war. When that conflict ended, the men who crewed the fleets began to raid the southeastern coasts of China.[195] The superior ships of the pirates and their fighting élan overwhelmed local Qing officials and navy tasked with combatting the brigands. From 1804 to 1806, Taiwan was under attack from pirates from without and wracked with uprisings from within. The two instructors, witnessing the escalating pirate attacks and the hapless Qing response to the crisis, took an active part in the defense of their counties, protecting the gates at Tainan, and organizing gentry and commoners into defensive forces in Jiayi county. When the crisis died down, the instructors, dissatisfied with the government's lackluster response

[195] For a historical narrative of the pirate threat, see Dian Murray, *Pirates of the South China Coast, 1790-1810*.

to reconstruction, were inspired to ensure long-term security by remaking the administrative geography of the southern maritime frontier through the incorporation of the northeastern region of Taiwan known as Gemalan (now Yilan). Embarking on a campaign to incorporate the new region, Xie and Zheng, produced treatises, allied with local officials, and used the Aofeng Academy scholarly network to take the issue to Beijing in order to bring it to the attention of the Qing court. The instructors' campaign to incorporate Gemalan demonstrates the increased space for provincial elites to determine local affairs in the Jiaqing period and their strategy to achieve their goal of maritime security through an informational campaign.

Gemalan (also called Hazinan), on the northeastern coast of Taiwan, was an attractive base for pirates, therefore constituting a danger to Qing control of the island. Consisting of a wide, fertile plain surrounded by high mountain ridges, the pirate leader, Cai Qian, attempted to seize Gemalan and transform it into a base of operations, but was repelled by a coalition of Chinese settlers and aborigines. Xie and Zheng, realizing the danger of this strategic region falling to pirate hands and the effect it would have on the security of Taiwan and its economic relationship to mainland Fujian, plotted to make the administrative incorporation of Gemalan an essential part of Taiwan's reconstruction. In order to build support for bringing Gemalan into the map, the instructors needed to find allies within the regular Qing administration. They found a kindred spirit and activist personality in the prefect of Taiwan, Yang Tingli (1747-1813). A native of Guangxi, Yang spent almost the entirety of his nearly thirty years of official service in Fujian and Taiwan. Due to his long tenure in Taiwan and personal experience in putting down the Lin Shuangwen (1787-1788) and Chen Zhouquan (1795) rebellions, he developed a reputation as a military troubleshooter for Taiwan. Also recognizing the potential of Gemalan as a productive region for the Han Chinese settlers and the danger it posed if pirates should occupy

it, Yang was keen to see it incorporated into the regular Qing administration. Therefore, he collaborated with his local activist allies, Xie and Zheng, to make formal incorporation a reality.

Whatever momentum an official patron may have provided, the Gemalan campaign faced headwinds when Yang was recalled in 1806 to face allegations of administrative malfeasance. Despite this setback, Xie began writing a treatise entitled *Hazinan jilue*, "A brief record of Hazinan." This treatise was an argument in favor of the administrative incorporation of Gemalan as well as a piece of positive propaganda for Yang Tingli that highlighted his indispensability to Taiwan and his outstanding reputation among the Han population there. Once printed, the treatise circulated among elite and official circles to win political support for the administrative incorporation of Gemalan and implicitly to garner the support needed to have Yang reinstated to an official post in Taiwan.

Though the treatise contained multiple sections, Xie's strategy to win support for incorporation was to highlight the history of Gemalan, the vulnerabilities of its residents, and their desire to be formally admitted into regular Qing administration. Not only was incorporation strategically necessary for Taiwan and Fujian, but morally essential for the state to bestow benevolent administration upon the residents of the vulnerable maritime frontier. The settlement of Gemalan, the instructor wrote, was the brainchild of a Zhangzhou native named Wu Sha who organized a motley crew of Zhangzhou, Quanzhou, and Cantonese natives, led them into Gemalan, cleared the land, and established fortresses for defense.[196] Portrayed as a kind of cultural hero who cleared the wilderness for settled agriculture, Wu was adept at managing and preventing violence among his polyglot group of emigrants. Xie takes Wu's civilizing impulse farther by claiming that Wu had unsuccessfully implored Qing officials to set up administration

[196] Xie Jinluan, "Yuanyou," *Hazinan jilue: yijuan*, in *Beijing Shifan daxue tushuguan guanfang jian fangzhi congkan* (Beijing: Beijing tushuguang chubanshe, 2007), 309.

in Gemalan so the settlers could provide taxes like other *liangmin*, "good people." Even after Wu Sha's death, the settlers proved their loyalty when they faced off against Cai Qian's pirates on their own initiative, thwarting the brigands' invasion, and forcing them back out to sea.[197] Xie concluded that despite the settlers' efforts in Gemalan, they were vulnerable to pirates and hostile aborigines as long as they fell outside the Qing administrative apparatus. Devoted allegiance to the state would naturally follow after administrative incorporation.

Xie addressed his historical, strategic, and moral argument for incorporating Gemalan to people who considered annexation impracticable. Taking the long view of the Qing experience in Taiwan, the instructor reminded his audience that the island itself was once considered impossible to govern. The same people who suggested that Gemalan was an unsuitable candidate for regular Qing administration were forgetting that during the early years of the dynasty many had their doubts about colonizing Taiwan in the first place. Failure to regularize administration in Gemalan would comprise a strategic disaster and allow pirates to entrench themselves; from such a natural fortress, their influence over Taiwan, Fujian, and the maritime frontier would be difficult to dislodge. It would also be a moral catastrophe to abandon subjects who appeared to crave inclusion in regular Qing administration as they bravely resisted pirate invasions. Xie criticized the timidity of nameless officials who did not want to go through the trouble of intervention, or whose only goal was to pass on the responsibility to others.[198] For Xie, Gemalan and its people deserved the protection and benevolence of the state. Its incorporation represented a clear ethical and strategic imperative. Without a regular Qing presence staffed by "benevolent" (i.e. "activist") officials, Gemalan would be filled by elements harmful to the security of the empire's maritime frontier.

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[197] Ibid.
[198] Xie, "Xuanfu," *Hazinan jilue*, 315.

Yang Tingli provided the treatise's preface, praising Xie for his comprehensive grasp of Gemalan's history, geography, and security challenges. He echoes Xie's major arguments against abandoning the region, stating unequivocally that letting Gemalan fall prey to pirates and brigands would be disastrous for Taiwan and Fujian.[199] In addition to presenting the treatise's central argument in the preface, Yang also took a starring role in the text itself. Xie detailed Yang's activities in Gemalan and Taiwan, effectively providing the prefect with a piece of "good press." In this bit of propaganda, Yang Tingli represents the benevolence of the Qing state due to his prescient concern with Gemalan, its people, and his understanding of Taiwan's security. In Xie's flattering account, Yang immediately apprehended the danger posed by the pirate fleets to Gemalan and its residents, and visited the region in person to ascertain its needs.[200] Implicitly, Yang's noble but lonely quest to "soothe" Gemalan demonstrates that his insight into local affairs, his qualities as an official, and benevolent disposition were all essential to the administration of Taiwan during a perilous moment, contrasting starkly with other local officials who merely worked to maintain the status quo. Xie's endorsement of Yang was a call for governance by far-sighted, activist-oriented personalities—qualities that mirrored his own moral and intellectual disposition. Finally printed by Yang Tingli, the text reflects a cooperative effort between the official and local worlds for the purpose of changing policy on the central level.

As treatise was being written by Xie and published by Yang, Zheng Jiancai monitored its production, and took it upon himself to lobby for the Gemalan cause on his journey to the mainland on his way to take the *jinshi* examination. It would be his fifth attempt.[201] Leaving Tainan to set sail to mainland Fujian from the port at Lugang, the popular instructor received a

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199 Ibid.
200 Ibid.
201 Zheng Xifu, 240.

raucous send-off from well-wishers.[202] As he arrived on the mainland in the late fall of 1807, he learned that Yang Tingli had been recalled.[203] In addition to popularizing the Gemalan incorporation issue, he began lobbying for Yang Tingli's return to the island.

Soon after Zheng arrived, he sought an audience with the governor of Fujian, Zhang Shicheng (1762-1830), to impress him with his personal observations of the situation in Taiwan and to lobby for the reinstatement of Yang Tingli as prefect. During the audience, the instructor detailed recent events in Taiwan, the struggle against the pirates, and the difficulty of getting the officials and people to cooperate in defense. The instructor singled out officials in Taiwan for their ineffectiveness in military affairs, and for using "bandits" as a pretext to excuse shoddy administration. In contrast to this bleak picture, Zheng identified Yang Tingli as a necessary and locally beloved official presence. Without Yang in Taiwan, Zheng mused, things might soon spin out of control.[204] Like Xie, Zheng urged government by activist officials to stem administrative malaise.

Why did Zheng believe he was qualified to comment on political affairs and Qing personnel decisions? Zheng acknowledged that as an educational official he was not strictly entitled to comment on matters of governance, yet personal experiences and observations forced him to speak up on matters confronting Taiwan.[205] More importantly, his letter to the governor revealed that his conception of the role of an educational official went beyond the mere instruction of students, and extended to the political and social life of the county and region. The instructor argued that those who held the reins of government in Taiwan did not convey the

202 Zheng Jiancai, "Taiwan xianxue jiaoyu zhengjun muzhiming," LTWJ.
203 Zheng Xifu, 239.
204 Zheng Jiancai, "Yanping tuci shang Zhang fujun shu," LTWJ.
205 Ibid.

sentiments and conditions of the people to the emperor, thereby disappointing those whom they governed and losing popular support.[206] Zheng continued,

> In my opinion, those in charge are completely [regular] officials, but education officials are not separate from the people. The educational official's occupation is between officials and the people. Therefore who knows better about the circumstances and sentiments of officials and the people than educational officials? In the past, officials and people both knew each other, so affairs were managed and commands were implemented. Nowadays, officials and the people are unable to know each other. If there is some contradictory thing that cannot be solved, educational officials will try to reach a resolution. The virtue of an educational official does not derive from those in charge, [but because] they are not far from the people, it is easy to understand the peoples' circumstances.[207]

In short, Zheng conceived of the education official as a mediator between regular officials and local residents. On one hand, instructors were centrally appointed, worked within the county's bureaucracy, and, as degree holders, frequently harbored dreams of becoming regular officials themselves. On the other hand, they hailed from the same province as those whom they instructed and were in close proximity to the educated elite of their districts. The instructor thus could serve as a link between officials and people to smooth over disputes and enhance local governance. The instructor could also transmit local grievances to higher levels as Zheng was doing in his audience with the governor of Fujian. In that sense, instructors could serve as a local censorate, and act as watchdogs over administrators. Zheng also assured the governor that Fujian had many capable county instructors who were highly conversant with practical affairs. He took the opportunity to recommend Xie Jinluan, as an example of an educational official who had written outstanding tracts on the island's economy and was now leading the Gemalan campaign.[208]

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[206] Ibid.
[207] Ibid.
[208] Ibid.

After his audience with the governor, Zheng journeyed to Beijing to sit for the *jinshi* examination. After his arrival in Beijing, Zheng sent a letter to Xie recounting his lobbying activities. He described the governor as sincere; yet while sympathetic to Zheng's request that Yang be reinstated, the governor, could do little.[209] In the same letter, Zheng waxed enthusiastic about the opportunity his trip to Beijing afforded him to share Xie's Gemalan treatise with officials in the capital. He proposed showing the treatise to his mentor Wang Tingzhen, who was had recently been promoted to Academician of the Grand Secretariat, and another friend, Xin Congyi, who was a compiler in the Hanlin Academy.[210] With their connections and political clout among metropolitan officials, they could be useful allies in the campaign to incorporate Gemalan.

Despite failing the *jinshi* exam for the fifth time, Zheng remained in Beijing. During that time, he wrote three letters to Wang Tingzhen emphasizing the importance of incorporating Gemalan into the regular Qing territorial administration. He first introduced Gemalan and the threats that it faced. He framed the issue of incorporation in moral and strategic terms, echoing the arguments made by Xie.[211] Zheng then introduced Xie Jinluan and his treatise. He proposed to forward a copy of the treatise for Wang to peruse and possibly provide a preface. "Someday," Zheng wrote, "Gemalan will be conjoined [to Taiwan], [Xie's] treatise will be put into effect, and your excellent prose will shine brightly overseas."[212] Zheng offered the preface as an opportunity for Wang to attach his name to a winning enterprise, and thereby enhance his reputation by association. Zheng then waited until Xie sent him a draft of the treatise, and

209 Zheng Jiancai, "Fu Tuigu," LTWJ.
210 Ibid.
211 Zheng Jiancai, "Shang Wang Sean xiansheng shu," LTWJ.
212 Ibid.

forwarded it to Wang for his perusal.[213] According to another letter, Wang did, in fact, compose a preface for the treatise. However, unaware that Zheng had sought a preface from his mentor, Xie only had time to include Zheng's suggestions on the treatise before it was printed by Yang Tingli.[214] Zheng also continued to advocate for Yang's reinstatement in Beijing. Despite his popularity in Taiwan, Zheng wrote, word of his accomplishments and indispensability had not yet reached the emperor's ear.[215] By presenting his mentor Wang with information about Gemalan and Yang Tingli's career, Zheng Jiancai hoped that these local issues could find a positive reception among Beijing's official circles and effect change back home.

While Zheng was lobbying for Gemalan and Yang Tingli in Beijing, Xie Jinluan also sought out influential voices to promote his completed treatise. Fortuitously, he enlisted Liang Shangguo (1750-1818), a high official in the central court at Beijing, to the Gemalan cause. Formerly, Liang and Xie were neighbors, living within the same village. They were also fellow Aofeng Academy alumni. While employed in the Hanlin academy, Liang developed a reputation for keeping tabs on events back in his home province, and for sharing his views on contemporary problems in documents sent to territorial officials and in memorials sent to the throne. Liang seems to have been especially concerned about violence in his native province. For instance, in 1800, Liang reported in a memorial that members of the Heaven and Earth secret society had infiltrated the military stationed in his home prefecture, and that local officials were covering up the problem.[216] Because of his hometown connections, Aofeng Academy affiliation, and willingness to memorialize the emperor to address contemporary Fujian problems, Liang must have appeared to Xie to be a natural ally on the Gemalan issue.

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213 Zheng Jiancai, "Shang Wang Sean xiansheng," LTWJ.
214 Zheng Jiancai, "Shang Sean xiansheng shu," LTWJ.
215 Ibid.
216 "Liang Shangguo," *Beichuan xuanji*, ed., Qian Yiji (Taipei: Datong shuju, 1995), 566.

Liang found Xie's treatise persuasive and took up the cause. Like Xie, he couched his arguments in strategic and ethical terms: the incorporation of Gemalan was necessary in order to eliminate the pirate threat, and the Qing had a moral obligation to civilize Gemalan and its people. Liang also spotlighted two other arguments that were implicitly embedded within Xie's treatise. The first was that Gemalan's incorporation would greatly increase the amount of cultivated land in Taiwan, leading to greater regional prosperity for settler-cultivators and enhanced food security for chronically low-producing Fujian. The second was to "civilize" obstreperous aborigines living there, and to transform them into non-violent, taxable cultivators. Convinced by these arguments, the Jiaqing court moved to incorporate Gemalan as a subprefecture (*ting*).

After the Jiaqing emperor sanctioned the incorporation of Gemalan, official sources obscured Xie's contribution. Years later, Gao Shuran—a *guwen* prodigy, friend of Aofeng Academy director, Chen Shouqi, and admirer of Xie—viewed a rare copy of Xie's treatise stored in a friend's collection.[217] Praising the treatise, Gao lamented that the original edition of Xie's treatise had been lost, and that future generations would forget Xie's role in bringing Gemalan into the map.[218]

Why do official accounts of the Gemalan saga omit Xie and his text? One explanation might be that as a lowly county instructor, Xie operated outside the normal parameters of official activity and communication. Indeed, the instructor himself seems quite aware that he could be perceived as exceeding the bounds of his authority. The preface to Xie's treatise recounts a conversation between Xie and an unnamed guest in which the visitor is said to have remarked:

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[217] Gao Shuran, "Shu Hazinan jilue hou," *Yikuaixuan wenji*, ed., Fujiansheng wenshi yanjiuguan (Yangzhou: Jiangsu guangling guji keyinshe, 1998), 1131-1133.
[218] Ibid.

> My! This is fruitless labor. You are an educational official. You have no responsibility for the people or the state, and now you're commenting on political affairs and what is best for the people. You must be very careful, or it will appear that you are overstepping your authority.[219]

The interlocutor's criticism was an accusation with which the instructor was familiar. Xie answered his critic by invoking a wider principle: an educational official could—and ought legitimately—to do more. Instructors were not about composing poetry or writing empty clichés, argued Xie, but instead being actively engaged in the investigation of things in order to benefit the state and people. Although an educational official could not formally rule on policy itself, they could—and ought—to investigate local conditions and advocate for the implementation of suitable policies.[220] By arguing that county instructors could tackle policy questions, Xie asserted the legitimacy of his voice in shaping local political affairs.

Both Xie and Zheng used their posts as county instructors to justify their local activism. Redefining their responsibilities beyond the instruction of students, they argued for a more expansive role to play in local society that entailed reporting on local conditions, transmitting the sentiments of county residents, and even altering the maritime frontier. The instructors used their orthodox educational *lixue* orientation and local status to undertake an informational campaign through the publication and transmission of a treatise. Contacts with associates of the Aofeng Academy allowed the Gemalan issue to gain support in official circles in Beijing, and ultimately win a positive reception at the Qing court. Seizing upon the flexibility of their posts, Fujianese identity, and influence through the Aofeng Academy, Xie and Zheng pioneered new strategies to achieve local goals at the central level. In the end, the local activism of the instructors was not lost on future generations of scholar-officials: Xie's text was eventually incorporated into Wei

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219 Xie, "Hazinan jilue xu," *Hazinan jilue*, 305.
220 Ibid.

Yuan's compendia of statecraft essays, the *Huangchao jingshi wenbian*, immortalized amongst other texts that "rectified the world." It is also important to note that the empowerment of the instructors to seek local change and to exert a level of control was a phenomenon that extended to many parts of empire during the early 19th century. Most notably, in Suzhou local elites were assuming more and more managerial roles and Yan Ruyi was pioneering new governing technologies to combat rebellion in his home province of Hunan.[221] The efforts of Zheng and Xie to bring Gemalan into the map therefore reflect an emerging empire-wide trend in which local elites became emboldened to handle tasks that were once the sole purview of officials.

Defending Students in Southern Fujian

After their stints in Taiwan, Zheng and Xie were posted to counties in mainland Fujian. Xie Jinluan was transferred to Anxi County, a mountainous inland region in Quanzhou prefecture, famous for both tea production and inter-lineage feuds (*xiedou*). As Xie settled into his new post, a local man named Lin Hei was murdered in a nearby village. To Xie's horror, Anxi County *shengyuan* were blamed for the death, and the county magistrate arrested seven of them.[222] The case of the accused students exposed tensions within the county and sparked intense disagreement between Xie as the county instructor and the local magistrate. The conflict also compelled Xie to transcend the boundaries of his official post by creating a guide to help future officials tasked with managing Fujian's unruly south and to lay out an alternative vision of local governance in which instructor and *shengyuan* acted autonomously to stabilize local society. Published and distributed by the Aofeng Academy, the treatise underscored a localist vision for

221 See, Han Seunghyun, *After the Prosperous Age*; Daniel McMahon, *Rethinking the Decline of China's Qing Dynasty*.
222 Xie, "Yu Chen mingfu shu," EWZWJ.

administration in southern Fujian, and turned the Aofeng Academy into an information center on local affairs for Qing officials.

The two southernmost prefectures in Fujian, Quanzhou and Zhangzhou, were notorious for violence. A combination of mountainous terrain, scant arable land, a high degree of commercialization and extensive trade networks, and a weak government presence made powerful lineage groups defining feature of southern Fujian local society; these groups would often clash in violent confrontations due to intense competition over scanty local resources, frequently killing the combatants.[223] Added to this volatile social milieu was the presence of *shengyuan*. Local officials across the empire frequently complained about *shengyuan* and their predilection for troublemaking by resisting tax collection, organizing and leading local uprisings, and contributing to bureaucratic backlog and inflaming local tensions by acting as *songshi* or "litigation masters."[224] No less a thinker than Gu Yanwu accused *shengyuan* of abandoning their original function as students preparing for a life of learning and public service in favor of fomenting trouble.[225] Students of Qing history trained in American universities know well about the short-lived rebellion of Zhong Renjie a *shengyuan* from Jiangxi.[226] For officials in Fujian, as elsewhere, *shengyuan* constituted a demographic that was prone to local troublemaking and criminal activity.[227] As an instructor, Xie was responsible for the *shengyuan* in his county and their behavior. A murder case implicating his students would endanger his position, undermine the status of *shengyuan*, and threaten the social order.

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223 Harry J. Lamley, "Lineage Feuding in Southern Fujian and Eastern Guangdong Under Qing Rule," 37.

224 Min, 32-49.

225 Gu Yanwu, *Gu Tinglin shiwenji*, 22

226 *Reading Documents: The Rebellion of Chung Ren-chieh,* comp., Philip A. Kuhn and John K. Fairbank (Cambridge: Harvard University, John King Fairbank Center for East Asian Research, 1986).

227 Macauley, 101.

Xie raced to save his accused students. He first investigated the situation and then sent confidential reports to the Fujian educational authorities detailing an alternative set of facts for the case. In his version, Lin Hei died as a result of a feud between two lineages in Chiling and Yaoyang. The murder occurred during a festival during the first month of the year when locals welcomed deities. Participants disguised their faces like demons, banged on drums, and brandished weapons. During the procession, a large group of these demon-faced men from Yaoyang forcibly occupied houses and towers in a third village where Lin Hei was shot and killed. Lin's companions alleged that he was killed by one of the demon-masked individuals, but could not identify the murderer by name, so they accused seven *shengyuan* from Yaoyang at the magistrate's yamen. Yet according to Xie, however, the presence of these the *shengyuan* at the site of Lin's murder could not be proven. Moreover, Xie wrote, the demon-faced men were lowlifes; it would be inconceivable for a *shengyuan* to participate in such activities.[228] Xie's defense of the *shengyuan* was of course self-interested. As the county instructor, he was responsible for the *shengyuan* and had to answer for their behavior; charging them with murder or even suggesting that they engaged in demon masquerades placed Xie's career in real jeopardy. In order to save the *shengyuan* and his reputation, Xie employed a new tactic: lobbying for the innocence of the *shengyuan* to higher authorities while spotlighting his expertise on local governance and exposing the fecklessness of officials through the publication of another treatise on governing strategies for southern Fujian.

Xie's treatise was both a rebuke to the *shengyuan*-blaming magistrate of Anxi County and an indictment of the administration of local officials serving in southern Fujian. Titled, "A discourse on governing methods for Quanzhou and Zhangzhou," the treatise explained to an

[228] Xie, "Zai shang Wang Fuxian shu," EWQWJ, 109-115.

imaginary audience of civil administrators posted to the region how a combination of deviant social customs and poor governance lead to southern Fujian's seemingly intractable violence. It also provided a guide for officials on how to govern the unruly prefectures. Xie thus highlighted his own status as an authoritative—and native—witness to the region's cultural and moral failings and to official mismanagement, while his claim of possessing a legitimate and essential voice centered on his status as an educational official. Asking rhetorically, "How can an *educational official* (*jiaozhi*) speak of methods of governing?"[229] His predictably self-interested response: to highlight the role of educators as social activists and as mentors to a new morally essential generation of students to stabilize a frequently violent social milieu.

While providing a coherent explanation for southern Fujian's violence rooted in the toxic interplay of officials and commoners, Xie's treatise was a deeply political document that placed a special social mission upon *shengyuan* and county instructors. Xie argued that it was the destiny of *shengyuan*, properly educated, to grasp the reins of moral reform, and so transform the cultural dysfunction of southern Fujian. Managed by the county instructors, both *shengyuan* and instructors would restore orthodox order to the fractured social landscape and do so free from the machinations of local commoners and mismanagement of local magistrates. In Xie's view, it was official and local harassment of *shengyuan* that kept southern Fujian in a permanent state of dysfunction.

The conflict over *shengyuan* strongly indicates a potentially adversarial relationship between instructors and magistrate. Certainly, the tension can be understood as a kind of "turf war" that was fought over the conduct and local roles of *shengyuan*. In regards to governing southern Fujian, the rift between instructor and magistrate broke over administration tactics: Xie

[229] Ibid.

argued whereas an educational official realized his influence through moral persuasion, a magistrate governed through law and punishments. Clearly, he saw moral persuasion as a more effective instrument, particularly in violent and litigious southern Fujian. Xie understood the dynamic between instructor and magistrate as two travelers crossing a river in a leaky boat. One of the travelers (the magistrate), instead of sealing up the leaks, takes a hammer and smashes holes into it, drowning them both.[230] Although Xie maintained that both the magistrate and instructor depended on the other, he contended that the governing style of magistrates in southern Fujian ultimately inhibited a stable and moral order from emerging. For Xie, a well-governed county needed the laws and punishments of the magistrate, as well as the moral order bestowed by county instructors upon local *shengyuan*.

Several years after Xie's death in the spring of 1820, Zhao Shenzhen, the new governor-general of Fujian and Zhejiang, paid a visit to Chen Shouqi, Xie's old friend and Aofeng Academy classmate, and by then the director of the Aofeng Academy. Chen was an Aofeng Academy director deeply invested in pressing local issues—the economy of Fujian in particular—who wrote about the salt and rice trades to resident governors and governors-general that sought his advice. In this instance, Chen, acting once again as a consultant in local Fujianese affairs, offered his assistance to the new governor. As Chen recalled, Zhao was extremely dejected over the dysfunctional circumstances in Quanzhou and Zhangzhou and sought out Chen's advice on how to deal with it.[231] Chen remembered his old friend Xie and his treatise. Producing a copy, he showed it to the governor-general, impressing the official deeply.[232]

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230 Ibid.

231 Xie Jinluan, "Quan Zhang zhifa lun xu," *Quan Zhang zhifa lun* (Fuzhou).

232 Ibid.

Zhao was fascinated by Xie. The governor-general agreed that Xie's experience as a native Fujianese working in an official capacity gave him greater insight into the political and social workings of Quanzhou and Zhangzhou than officials from outside Fujian.

> This text is the words of a Fujianese. It is [written by] a Fujianese who loves the Fujianese people and knows of their hardships. It is complete. In loving the Fujianese and knowing the Fujianese, it is complete. Listening to Xie's words, one can understand me; [yet], these are not the words of a governor-general, but the words of a Fujianese. And my words are the words of a high official that has just arrived in Fujian.[233]

The governor-general declared that what Xie wrote in his tract mirrored his own feelings on the problems and solutions for Quanzhou and Zhangzhou. Since the insights were articulated by a Fujianese native, Zhao evidently felt that aligning his opinions with an "insider" gave him more confidence his administration would move in the right direction.[234] Because the treatise was housed inside the library of the vaunted Aofeng Academy and endorsed by Chen, its head, Zhao would have been reassured that Xie was no crank. The governor-general was equally impressed with Xie's status as a mere county instructor. Although Xie had "no responsibility for governing people," he was moved to act by the suffering in southern Fujian, compelling him to "act like a father and mother official."[235] In short, Zhao implied that Xie was behaving like a magistrate—or as a magistrate ought to behave.

In the spring of 1823, Zhao ordered that Xie's text be printed and distributed around Fujian. He requested that Chen Shouqi, the Aofeng Academy head, carve the blocks, print copies, and circulate copies of Xie's treatise. Thus, in addition to becoming Fujian's premier center of learning, the Aofeng Academy became a locus for the printing, distribution, and circulation of

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233 Ibid.
234 Ibid.
235 Ibid.

texts dealing with local Fujianese affairs. The alliance of local and official interests met in the publication of Xie's treatise with the addition of prefaces and new chapters written by Zhao and Chen. The revised text was distributed to prefects and magistrates with instructions to first read it, absorb its message, and then place the copies in county schools and lineage ancestral halls, presumably to encourage county students and warn obstreperous lineages.[236] Through such a distribution program undertaken by the Aofeng Academy, Zhao hoped that officials, lineage members, and *shengyuan* would have a common understanding of the challenges facing southern Fujian—and potential solutions to address them.

Reception of Xie's treatise was not always positive, however. For instance, Guo Shangxian, a retired high-ranking official from Putian County, who wrote about the challenges facing the governance of southern Fujian regarded Xie's treatise as a superficial and clichéd presentation of the issues afflicting Zhangzhou and Quanzhou.[237] Yet, the treatise became something of a touchstone for future generations of Qing officials who sought advice on how to deal with the problematic southern regions. It was reprinted as late as 1868 and once again distributed to Fujian officials, students, and lineages, becoming an enduring text on governance in Fujian over the 19th century.[238]

The case of the accused *shengyuan* compelled Xie to use the crisis as an opportunity to criticize local governance in southern Fujian and proffer suggestions for reform. Seizing upon his "local expertise" as a fellow Fujianese, he argued for an alternative governing relationship that reserved a significant role for *shengyuan* and county instructors to stabilize local society, and do so with a degree of autonomy from regular officials. As the treatise moved from locality, to

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236 Ibid.

237 Guo Shangxian, "Du Mazhou Zhengshi jiapu shu hou," *Zengmoan wenji* (Putian qianyinben, 1931).
238 Xie, "Chongkan Quan Zhang zhifa lun xu," *Quan Zhang zhifa lun*.

academy, and to officialdom, it increased in authoritative weight through the added prefaces of Chen, the academy director, and Zhao, the governor-general. The Aofeng Academy and its well-connected head were instrumental in bridging Xie's claim to local expertise and his later official endorsement. The academy's role in publishing, circulating, and distributing officially endorsed local literature like Xie's treatise elevated it as a center for mediating local and imperial interests, and transforming the academy into a think-tank of sorts for giving policy prescriptions to local Qing officials.

"The Instructor Speaks": Xie Jinluan's activist vision for cultivating students and officials

As Xie approached the end of his life, he "grew tired of official duties," as the author of his tomb inscription put it, and planned to retire.[239] Before leaving his post at Anxi County, he wrote a final text. Entitled *Jiaoyu yu* ("The instructor speaks"), it was ostensibly a manual on how to train students, and summed up Xie's philosophy and practice of education. Its main goal, however, was to inculcate would-be officials with a sense of moral mission and underpin their administrations with a muscular orthodox foundation. With this last text, Xie created a program to cultivate morally grounded and results-oriented local officials—the kind of personnel needed to address pressing issues in early 19th century China.

Emphasizing practicality, action, and moral cultivation, the text presented Xie's vision for a moral and activist educational program. Xie first provided both students and future county instructors an educational plan: what books to read, how to understand those books, how to write, which writing styles to use, and how to cultivate oneself morally. The proposed curriculum

[239] Xie Jinluan, "Huang Qing chishou wenlinlang Anxi xian xue jiaoyu Xie jun muzhiming," by Chen Shouqi, *Jiaoyu yu* (Beijing: 1932).

heavily tilted towards Song-learning.[240] Reflecting its strong *lixue* bent, the text emphasized students' moral cultivation and their practical roles in local communities. Xie warned students not to "shut their doors and read," but to actively study current events to put knowledge into practice.[241] Xie thus created an educational program to cultivate future activist scholars and far-sighted officials.

The other major concern of the text was to address the proper conduct of the county magistrate. Regarding this official as the most consequential figure in the day-to-day management of the empire, Xie was keenly aware of that official's beneficial or baleful influence on local affairs. The quality of magistrates was therefore an essential priority for the reproduction of competent administration, and their proper training was a central goal of Xie's final text.[242] Besides providing future officials with the proper orthodox orientation in the educational realm, Xie included instruction on practical affairs, such as managing grain, money, and taxes, promoting the livelihoods of county residents, funding the county through lawsuits and customary fees, improving local customs, writing proper reports, managing staff disputes, and avoiding corruption. Perhaps reflecting on his experience with the arrest of the Anxi county *shengyuan,* Xie argued that it was essential for the magistrate to be clear-eyed and exercise vigorous control over the county functionaries.[243] By providing and educational and practical foundation to students ambitious to become officials, Xie, a lowly county instructor, aspired to improve the quality of future magistrates and their administration.

Even though Xie remained a county instructor, he apparently did not feel that it was presumptuous to advise and train future magistrates. His experiences in Taiwan and Fujian

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240 Xie, "Yinyan," *Jiaoyu yu* (Fuzhou: Wu Yutian keban, 1868).
241 Xie, "Li shen xingji," *Jiaoyu yu* (1868).
242 Xie, "Juguan zhiyong," *Jiaoyu yu* (1868).
243 Ibid.

exposed him to the failings of local officials. Where those magistrates failed, Xie took the initiative: first to organize the defense of Jiayi County, campaign for the incorporation of Gemalan, and then to struggle against a supposed injustice against *shengyuan* and rectify "degenerate" customs in Anxi County. Certainly, Xie felt he could intervene when a magistrate was deficient or in error, but he may have also considered that his post of instructor was on a comparable level as a magistrate. In his report to the prefect alerting him to the arrest of the *shengyuan* in Anxi County, Xie lamented that in ages past, both magistrate and instructor were selected based on the quality of their scholarship, and that instructors were not inferior to county officials.[244] In the conclusion of *Jiaoyu yu*, he reminded his readers that while a county magistrate is merely concerned with the day-to-day district minutiae and has no concern about events beyond their county borders, the instructor, concerned with putting his learning into practice, must have a broad curiosity about current and local affairs.[245] For Xie, having a broad perspective and the leisure to focus on specific issues allowed county instructors to tackle problems outside the magistrate's purview, making instructors a vital figure in the improvement of local affairs.

After his death, Xie's manual gained a wide following among educational and official circles. Published in six provinces through the Tongzhi period (1861-1875) by admirers and Aofeng Academy alumni, it was placed in the libraries of several academies, including Aofeng.[246] The enthusiastic reception and extended publication of Xie's text does him credit as an orthodox scholar and activist with a reputation that gradually extended beyond the borders of Fujian. The spread and continuing popularity of the text into the late 19th century indicates the

244 Xie, "Yu Chen mingfu shu," EWZWJ, 101-106.
245 Xie, "Juguan zhiyong," *Jiaoyu yu* (1868).
246 Xie,"Xiaoke jiaoyu yu xu," by Chen Chunyan, *Jiaoyu yu* (1932).

cultural reach of the Aofeng Academy and its publications, championed by famous alumni such as Lin Zexu who adored Xie's text. Praising the book for being focused on practical use, scholars entering a physically ravaged and morally exhausted post-Taiping world in the 1860s embraced the text as a handbook for educational and moral reconstruction for a new crop of students and officials to be trained in in orthodox norms.

Enshrining activism and modeling local political engagement

By the close of the Jiaqing reign, Xie and Zheng were famous across their home province. Their actions and texts on the Gemalan issue and the case of the accused *shengyuan* had solidified their reputations as activists and experts in local affairs, and they were increasingly regarded as models of political and moral action in elite circles in Fuzhou. After their deaths in 1825, their old friend and classmate, Chen Shouqi, now the head of the Aofeng Academy, successfully lobbied for Xie and Zheng to be included in the shrine of local worthies, signifying the clout of the academy and its associates to arbitrate cultural affairs in Fujian.[247] As the Daoguang reign (1820-1850) commenced, Xie and Zheng influenced a new generation of scholars and officials who would become active in elite Beijing politics and during the politically contentious years of the Opium War.

One significant admirer was Yao Ying (1785-1853), a leading light in the Qing's "inner Opium War." Yao was a prolific *guwen*-style belletrist, and a towering member of the Spring Purification circle, a faction of scholars who self-consciously modeled themselves on the late-Ming Donglin clique. He fashioned himself as an uncompromising official, working in lower-

[247] Seunghyun Han has shown that local elites became increasingly involved in the production of cultural forms that were once the prerogative of the Qing government during the Jiaqing reign, particularly the enshrinement of local worthies. Han, 119.

level provincial posts to prove himself as an activist official and win national recognition.[248] Yao began his career as minor official in Fujian and Taiwan in the early Daoguang reign, including as the assistant prefectural magistrate of Gemalan, which had be brought into the map due to the efforts of the two instructors.

Journeying to Fujian in 1816 to take up the post of magistrate of Longxi County, Yao heard tales of the two instructors and their exploits. He was fascinated with the instructors' role in the defense against pirate raids of the early Jiaqing reign, and was impressed with their initiative to bring about the incorporation of Gemalan, signifying the power of moral action to bestow practical state and local benefits.[249] In 1820, Yao met Zheng in person, as the old instructor arrived in Taiwan County to once again resume his old post. Perhaps sensing a kindred spirit in this new magistrate, Zheng handed over his collected works to Yao to read and edit. When Zheng died a short time later, Yao took care of the arrangements to transport the body home and wrote funeral epitaphs in his honor.[250]

Yao Ying's admiration for the two instructors should be interpreted through his own political orientation. Concerned that "passive" and "pliable" officials were could not turn the tide of an empire entering an advanced age, Yao advocated for the cultivation of a new crop of officials with a robust moral orientation and vigorous personality to tackle pressing problems, even at the risk of offending superiors.[251] Zheng and Xie fit Yao's prescription for robust action to achieve meaningful change. He was most impressed with the instructors for their role in bringing Gemalan into the map, even at the risk of overstepping their bounds as county instructors and offending the sensibilities of regular officials. He credited Xie's treatise as the

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248 James M. Polachek, *The Inner Opium War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 68-69.
249 Ibid.
250 Ibid.
251 Polachek, 97.

prime factor that led to Gemalan's incorporation, providing Taiwan with a bulwark against enemies from the sea and affording it with enhanced food security thanks to its abundant grain production.[252] He was also moved by the instructors' support of Yang Tingli despite their low official status and "jealousy" of other Qing officials, demonstrating for Yao the inherent strength of like-minded scholars and officials who banded together to promote a common cause.[253] Between personally contributing to the defense of Taiwan during the pirate raids of the early Jiaqing period, offering military strategy to the prefectural authorities, incorporating Gemalan, and supporting other activist officials, Zheng and Xie demonstrated to Yao what activists could achieve at the local level, provided they had the right moral orientation and political drive.

Many years later after Zheng's death, Yao Ying enlisted the example of Zheng Jiancai to assist Taiwan during the Opium War. With the Spring Purification circle adherents ascendant at the Daoguang court, Yao was assigned to the vital position of Taiwan Intendant in 1837, and remained at that post through the duration of the conflict.[254] As British ships prowled the seas off the Qing coasts, Yao requested that Yang Tingli and Zheng Jiancai receive sacrifices in the shrine to worthy officials.[255] Extolling Zheng for his achievements in practical learning, his attention to current affairs, and his experience in fighting a maritime enemy, Yao bolstered gentry support by invoking the memory of the long-dead but still-popular instructor as he dealt with the threat of foreign invasion and persistent local disturbances.[256]

Yao's admiration for the two instructors was also shared by his protégé, Zhang Jiliang (1799-1843). Zhang was an eccentric poet-scholar from western Fujian and an Aofeng Academy

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252 Yao Ying, "Gemalan yuanshi," *Dongcha jilue* (Taizhong: Wenting ge, 2006), 69.
253 Zheng Jiancai, "Fu Tuigu," LTWJ.
254 Yao Junchang, *Yao Shifu xiansheng nianpu* (Beijing: Beijing tushuguan chubanshe, 1998), 549.
255 Yao Ying, "Wei Yang Shuangwu Zheng Liuting qing si minghuan zhuang," *Dongming wenhouji*, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, Vol. 549, ed., bianzuan weiyuanhui (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2010), 504.
256 Ibid.

alumnus with a passion for *guwen*-style prose.[257] Cultivated by Yao Ying with whom he shared a literary and intellectual bond, he was introduced to literati circles in Beijing, and transformed the literary preferences of the Spring Purification circle members with his "emotional, direct, even perhaps primitive poetic expressions."[258] Zhang shared with Yao an urge to cultivate a robust moral orientation among officials and literati.[259] Before his foray into Beijing's political and literary circles, he drew moral and political inspiration from the two instructors, both of whom were fellow Fujianese and Aofeng Academy alumni.

Like Yao Ying, Zhang saw in the instructors the embodiment of his moral and literary ideal—men whose moral orientation compelled them to address pressing problems and to undertake meaningful and effective action. The young poet-prodigy particularly esteemed Xie's treatise on governing Zhangzhou and Quanzhou and his manual for training students, *Jiaoyu yu*, and admired Zheng Jiancai for his defensive action during the pirate incursions and for declining the position of magistrate in Jiangxi.[260]

Zhang's connection with the instructors was not merely an intellectual affinity. In the closing years of the Jiaqing era, Zhang struck up an intimate friendship and literary exchange with two instructors before their deaths. In 1818, during the provincial examinations, they climbed the peak facing the Aofeng Academy together, where Zheng recalled exciting anecdotes from his experiences battling pirates in Taiwan.[261] The younger scholar, impressed, composed a commemorative poem declaring that the instructor, having a higher purpose in mind, was willing

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257 Polachek, 70.
258 Polachek, 71.
259 Polachek, 93-94.
260 Zhang Jiliang, "Xie Jinluan zhuan," and "Zheng Jiancai zhuan," *Jiao jiulu* (Minguo edition).
261 Zhang Jiliang, "Ti Zheng Liuting Jiancai xiansheng dongyin shou feng tu," juan 2, *Si bozi tang shiji*, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, Vol. 601, ed., bianzuan weiyuanhui (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2010).

to brave the dangerous sea journey to satisfy his aspirations.[262] Sensing the frustrated ambition of the talented young scholar, the instructors encouraged their friend, predicting that he would shine in the near future.[263] After the deaths of the two instructors, Zhang bemoaned the loss of his mentors. He composed memorials, reminiscences, and poems to commemorate the instructors for their deeds in life and for their impact as political models on younger scholars like himself. Ha also worshipped at Xie's grave years after his death.[264]

Zhang, like Yao, saw his moral and political orientation manifested in the lives of the two instructors. Here were two men who did not win the *jinshi* examination or achieve recognition on a national level, who yet were able to impact local issues on a level that far exceeded their nominal position through the force of their personalities. As Zhang and Yao embraced an ethics of moral action in the Daoguang period and helped remake literati politics in Beijing through the Opium War, Zheng and Xie continued as activist exemplars for their successors on the national level.

Conclusion

Through intellectually vigorous *lixue* orientations, the assistance of the Aofeng Academy network, their publications, and their own prodigious energies, Zheng Jiancai and Xie Jinluan transcended the normative boundaries of their roles as instructors and transformed themselves into local activists. Punching above the weight of their official posts, the instructors exercised an outsized influence in the direction of affairs in Fujian and Taiwan, remaking the map of the empire with the incorporation of Gemalan, providing a program of action to govern the rowdy

262 Ibid.
263 Ibid.
264 Ibid.

southern Fujianese prefectures of Quanzhou and Zhangzhou, and lobbying for the enhanced participation of instructors and *shengyuan* in local society. For their activism and literary production, they were enshrined as local worthies, and celebrated as models of local action, particularly by the associates of the Aofeng Academy.

Although they cultivated reputations as local experts, much of the instructors' success was due to their production of information and their relationship to the Aofeng Academy. The mediation of the academy and its status as an orthodox center of scholarship granted the instructors an authoritative voice by providing them with the prestige of a well-regarded institution. The pivotal role of the academy in elevating the instructors' writings, publishing their treatises, and disseminating their "locally expert" information not only made the instructors' writings palatable to Qing officials, but also made their proposals worth implementing. In short, without the influence of the academy and its authority, the writings of Zheng and Xie might have been dismissed as the hackneyed scribbles of backwater cranks, and therefore without value to Qing officials. With the implied assurance of the academy, Qing officials benefitted from a source of information that was outside the usual bureaucratic channels and free of its limitations. The publications of Zheng and Xie therefore constituted a method of obtaining relevant information on pressing problems and possible solutions that official sources of information could not provide during a challenging moment for the dynasty. Though extra-bureaucratic by nature, this new source of information wielded an authoritative voice, and, more importantly, aligned itself with Qing interests. For Qing officials serving in Fujian or in Beijing, it was useful, respectable, and non-threatening. In turn, Zheng and Xie (and by extension, the Aofeng Academy and its associates) enhanced their local influence by aligning themselves with Qing interests, winning authority from the center to exercise power locally. Through a symbiotic

relationship with the Qing bureaucracy, the instructors carved out a broad space for vigorous local activism at the turn of the 19th century.

The instructors' virtuosity in the production of information and their drive to enhance local control also reflects broader patterns in the changing orientation of Chinese elites beginning in the Jiaqing reign. As the Jiaqing court loosened informational controls with the opening of the *yanlu*, it also gave greater sanction to elites to manage local affairs and even exercise influence over things such as rebel pacification and borderland management—areas that had stymied the Qing militarily and threatened to ruin it financially. As previously mentioned, the case of Yan Ruyi—his intellectual blossoming in the *jingshi*-infused atmosphere of the Yuelu Academy, his extensive writings on new structures to combat rebels in Hunan and pirates in Guangdong, and his alignment with Qing interests—closely mirrors the trajectory of Xie Jinluan and Zheng Jiancai. All three of these activists worked in borderland areas that witnessed violence and fraying imperial control. By empowering local elites like Yan, Zheng, and Xie to deal with problems on its frontiers, the Qing state enhanced its ability to deal with its troubled borderlands without added imperial investment, but also may have fundamentally changed its relationship to elites in the process.

CHAPTER FOUR

Lin Shumei: The Creation of a Local Expert

In 1831, Lin Shumei presented his family's Japanese sword to the circuit intendant, Zhou Kai, in his yamen in Xiamen. The blade had been in Lin's family for generations, having been acquired sometime during the mid-Ming Wakō raids that menaced the Chinese coasts. Thereafter, the sword signified the Lins' hereditary affiliation with the navy for hundreds of years.[265] As he admired the ancient sword in his hands, Zhou also esteemed its young owner, his protégé, who, up until that point, had spent nearly his entire youth sojourning in the far-flung garrisons of the Fujian littoral. Here before him, Zhou mused, was someone who could handle both *wen* and *wu*.

This chapter examines the life, education, and career of Lin Shumei (1808-1851), and his development as a self-styled expert in local Fujianese and military affairs. Born into a military family, he spent his early years traveling with his father, a naval officer, on the high seas to Qing military outposts, which imbued him with a wealth of practical knowledge. Yet, becoming a recognized local expert was predicated on his acquisition of scholarly patrons, his affiliation with northern Fujianese and Aofeng Academy literary circles, and rigorous training in *guwen*-style prose. By securing a network of northern and eventually southern Fujianese scholars, by equipping himself with the literary technology of *guwen*, and by participating in the creation of a southern literary circle headquartered in Xiamen, Lin transformed himself into an expert in local affairs and an authority in maritime defense. Through his scholarly networks and his literary

[265] Lin Shumei, "Riben dao," *Xiaoyun shanren wenchao* in *Taiwan wenxian huikan*, Vol. 4, Ed., Zhiping Chen (Xiamen: Xiamen daxue chubanshe, 2004), 401-403. According to one account, the Lin family retained the sword and Lin Tingfu's armor until the Japanese occupation period during the 20th century. Fearing trouble in case the weapon and armor were discovered, the items were thrown into a well, and were never recovered. *Jinmen xianxian lu*, Jinmen xian weiyuanhui (Jinmen: Bianzhe yinxing, 1970), 124.

virtuosity, he attracted the patronage of Qing officials posted to Fujian and implemented his ideas for governance in a region wracked with domestic turmoil and facing international conflict.

Beginnings

Lin Shumei's early life was defined by the dictates of the Qing navy. He was born in 1808 in a Jinmen village called Houpu, the sixth son of Chen Chunpu. The Chens of Houpu were a military family, and a part of Jinmen's heavy naval presence, a continuing legacy of the Qing's conquest of the southeast coastal regions and Taiwan during the mid-17th century. Jinmen itself lay just a few kilometers away from the neighboring island of Xiamen, the headquarters of the Fujian navy. The island was truly a naval citadel. Xiamen was the base of the Fujian naval commander, who ranked just below the governor-general, reflecting the Qing state's overriding concern with security on its unstable southeastern maritime reaches.[266] Native Fujianese tended to be appointed to the most important naval posts in the province, including the powerful naval commander, and the Qing court often sided with these military commanders when civil officials or even governors-general complained that they were being deferential to their fellow provincials.[267] From behind the walled citadel on Xiamen island—the offices of the local civil authorities on Xiamen were conspicuously sited outside the walls—the naval commander oversaw garrisons on Jinmen, Haitan, Nan'ao, Penghu and Taiwan, and the sailors mainly hailed from the southern Fujianese prefectures of Quanzhou and Zhangzhou.[268] The naval garrison in Jinmen was central to the Qing efforts to secure its southeastern coasts, protect the vital military

[266] Ng, 61-62.

[267] Ng, 76. Ng argues that the Fujian military authorities and merchants based in Xiamen had a close and cooperative relationship, which was encouraged by the Qing emperors to guarantee a stable livelihood to land-starved Fujianese, and to ensure a steady stream of money through the lucrative Maritime's Customs Office, which answered directly to the Qing court.

[268] Ng, 34, 62.

and merchant center at Xiamen, and defend the vital link to Taiwan. From his yamen in southern Jinmen, the regional commander (*zongbing*) of the garrison managed ships, patrols, and sailors; those numbers could be cut or increased as the situation demanded.[269] As Lin Shumei was born in the middle of the pirate crisis of the early 19th century, the number of sailors stationed in Jinmen ballooned to more than one thousand.[270]

Chen Chunpu, Lin Shumei's birth father, was part of the rapidly increasing number of sailors sent to confront the pirate fleets in the seas off Fujian and Taiwan. He served as a mid-ranking naval officer in the Green Standard Army in the Jinmen garrison. Shumei was the last of Chunpu's six sons. After her marriage, Chunpu's paternal cousin was childless, so Chunpu offered to have Shumei adopted out as her son. Like his natal family, Shumei's adopted family had a strong military tradition. The father of Shumei's adopted mother, Chen Bigao, served as a naval *waiwei*. Stationed in Taiwan in the late Qianlong period, he fought rebel forces during Lin Shuangwen Rebellion, and was ultimately killed in action by rebels in Fengshan County. Bigao was granted posthumous titles and enshrined within the Manifest Loyalty Shrine in Taiwan County, but he left behind a wife and daughter who soon faced poverty.

Shumei's adopted mother was married to a man named Lin Tingfu. Like the Chens, the Lins of Houpu village in Jinmen were a small and undistinguished lineage. Originating from Longxi County in Zhangzhou prefecture on the Fujian mainland, they moved to nearby Tong'an County in neighboring Quanzhou prefecture during the Jiajing period (1521-1567). Their founding ancestor of the Jinmen branch, Guoyuan, settled on the island with his son in 1678 after

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269 Zhuo Kehua, *Guji, lishi, Jinmenren* (Taipei: Lantai chubanshe, 2008), 7.

270 Lin Kunhuang, "Guochao xingai yingzhi," juan 5, *Jinmen zhi*, juan 5, < www.guoxue123.com/tw/02/080/015.htm> Accessed 3/15/17. In 1806, the number of sailors was increased to one thousand in order to fight the pirate fleets of Cai Qian and Zhu Fen. When the pirate fleets were eliminated, the number of sailors was reduced. In 1817, 228 sailors were cut from the Jinmen garrison and sent to man the newly created fleet stationed in Tianjin.

escaping a flood, and members of succeeding generations frequently pursued careers in the Qing navy.[271] By the time Lin Shumei was born in 1808, the southeastern coastal region from Guangdong to Zhejiang was menaced by the huge pirate fleets of Cai Qian and Zhu Fen, and the sailors from the Jinmen garrison patrolled the seas and did battle with the corsair fleets.

A naval career also appealed to Lin Shumei's adoptive father, Tingfu. When he was seventeen *sui*, his family had descended into hard times, yet the young man did not lack for ambition. At the turn of the 19th century the presence of the Cai and Zhu pirate fleets prompted Lin Tingfu to regard a career in the Qing navy as a means to secure steady employment and a chance to win merit and promotion. Fighting under commanders Li Nansheng and Xu Songnian, Tingfu engaged in great naval battles around Taiwan and Fujian to destroy the pirate fleets, and won distinction for capturing and killing brigands and burning their ships. By the time Shumei was born, Lin Tingfu was already a mid-ranking officer in the navy. Over the mid-Jiaqing and early Daoguang reigns, Tingfu was steadily promoted, eventually securing the post of vice admiral.

Serving in naval garrisons from Guangdong to Jinmen to Tianjin, Lin Tingfu patrolled the seas under his jurisdiction, fought small-time bandits, put down local rebellions, and won honorary distinctions for himself and for his deceased parents. He also oversaw the construction and delivery of warships to various naval garrisons.[272] Qing warships required massive amounts

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271 Chen Ming, *Haijiang wenxue shuxie yu tuxiang: Lin Shumei qiterensheng yu yiwen yanjiu* (Jincheng: Jinmen xian wenhaju, 2011), 109, 112.

272 Lin Shumei, "Xian kao Shoutang fujun xingshu," *Jingyuanzhai wenchao* in *Taiwan wenxian huikan*, Vol. 4, ed. Zhiping Chen (Xiamen: Xiamen daxue chubanshe, 2004),500-509. In an article, Zhou Weiqiang examines the foundation of the Green Standard "Jinzhou" fleet in 1816 by the Jiaqing emperor to protect the maritime gateway to Beijing at Tianjin due to the unexpected arrival of the British envoy, William Amherst. The northern fleet was composed mostly of Fujianese Green Standard sailors, and veterans of the wars against the pirate fleets of Cai Qian and Zhu Fen. In 1818, Lin Tingfu was recommended by the governor-general of Fujian and Zhejiang, Dong Wenge, to serve in Tianjin. He returned to Fujian in 1821 after the fleet was downsized by the newly enthroned Daoguang emperor. See, Zhou Weijiang, "The Rise and Fall of Tianjin's Green Standards Fleet During the Reigns of Qing

of money, material, and labor to build and maintain. In 1725, after the end of the Zhu Yigui rebellion in Taiwan, the Yongzheng Emperor established military shipyards called *jungong chang* to produce warships for the navy on mainland Fujian and Taiwan.[273] The ships required lumber from the camphor tree, which had a degree of resistance to rot and insects. Such trees tended to grow at very high elevations in Fujian and Taiwan, making their harvest and transport dangerous and expensive. In the early 19th century, pirate incursions forced the Qing navy to produce a new class of warship, called the Tong'an ship after the home county of Xiamen and modeled after the ships comprising its merchant fleets. These were larger and heavier than other naval vessels in order to confront the state-of-the-art ships in the fleets of Cai Qian and Zhu Fen. The larger ships, in turn, required more lumber from the increasingly scarce camphor tree to produce and maintain.[274] The difficulty of producing the necessary camphor lumber was described by an unnamed dissenter who decried the expansion of Tong'an ship production in the mid-19th century compendia of statecraft, the *Da Qing jingshi wenbian*:

> According to the details of the magistrate responding to the decree to obtain 20 tree trunks for masts, at Nancheng they search for trees, fell them, and send them to the [prefectural capital]. They built bridges and opened roads, using thousands of people. Each truck requires [the labor] of 250 people. They lift it and carry it to the waterside. But if the stream is dried up, the trunks don't move. Again, they receive a call for 180 trunks and transport them to Zhangzhou. For each trunk they fell, they must tunnel through the mountains, and dam the water to build bridges. They use thousands of people to pull the carts. During exhausting days, they can only move a few li. Although the energy of a myriad of people is exhausted, year in and year out, they still cannot move [the tree trunks]. They work all day, hoping that soldiers will come and help. It's all because of the orders to supervise and build Tong'an ships. The Tong'an

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Emperors Jiaqing and Daoguang (1816-1839)," *The National Palace Museum Research Quarterly* 29:4 (2012): 221-249.

273 Chen Guodong, *Taiwan de shanhai jingyan* (Taipei: Yuanliu chuban shiye gufen youxian gongsi caituan faren Cao Yonghe wenjiao jijinhui, 2005), 286.

274 Most of the lumber came from the mountains of mainland Fujian, but new sources were exploited from the forests of Gemalan after its incorporation into Taiwan prefecture, thanks to the lobbying by the activist instructor, Xie Jinluan. Chen Guodong, 349.

> ship wood is from the mountainous counties where is it cut into boards, and then transported. Then we come to the wood for the masts. Skilled workers must go into the mountains to select appropriate specimens. From one end to the other end of the trunk, the workers use hatches to knock against the wood and produce a sound to make sure not one inch is curved or rotten. Only then can it be considered to be of any quality. If trees are cut down with no regard for quality, they might have defects and cannot be used. Or maybe some trees are cut down along the roadside and are incomplete. When they arrive at the final destination only one or two out of ten can be used. And the people's energy is needlessly exhausted.[275]

As a military official overseeing the production and delivery of warships, Lin Tingfu would have had to deal with the costs of securing ship-making materials, overseeing construction, and providing regular maintenance for weathered and sea-battered ships. His adopted son gleaned his knowledge of ships and sailing from him.

In his very early life, Shumei was cared for by his adoptive mother and grandmother while his father was posted and transferred to various naval garrisons along the coasts.[276] After Tingfu's wife died, however, Tingfu began to share his peripatetic lifestyle with his adopted son and took the boy with him to various military postings. From the ages of eight to twenty-three *sui* Shumei accompanied his adoptive father to at least eight different naval garrisons in Fujian and Taiwan. Constantly moving to different garrisons could be a harrowing experience when sailing on the unpredictable seas. In the summer of 1824, Shumei was on a sea voyage with his father when their ship suddenly encountered a violent storm that interfered with their navigation and threatened to sink the ship itself. Rushing to plug the leaks (including a leak in the ship's shrine to the Empress of Heaven [Tianhou, or Mazu]), they survived the night, and in the morning

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275 Anonymous, "Qing mian cai weimu zhuang," *Qing jingshi wenbian*, ed. Wei Yuan (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1992), 2328a.

276 Lin Shumei, "Xian bi Chen shuren xingshu," in *Jingyuanzhai wenchao*, 510-513.

relied on the gradations in the ocean's colors from green to blue to white to navigate to the port of Luermen in Taiwan.[277]

While serving as his father's assistant in various garrisons, Shumei learned first-hand about Qing naval operations and the management of ships and personnel by observing his father's duties as a military officer. Living with his father among military men and listening to their stories, he both earned a first-hand education in military affairs, and a narrative account of the recent and ongoing violence along Fujian's maritime. Shumei later recalled that as he and his father sailed into the port of Luermen in Taiwan, Tingfu suddenly became animated, and began to narrate his part in the naval battle that had failed to destroy Cai Qian's fleet at the very same place some years previously. After listening to his father's account, Shumei next proceeded with his father to Fengshan County to quell a local uprising.[278] From an early age, Shumei was impressed that state and illicit violence constituted an elemental part of the maritime world.

Although capturing and killing pirates and putting down local uprisings was a fundamental part of the Lin "family business," not all aspects of a military career were predicated on violence. Tingfu also saw himself as a booster of local culture through the donation of funds and sponsorship of infrastructure in much the same vein as a sojourning civil official. In 1825, while stationed in the Penghu naval garrison off the coast of Taiwan, Tingfu appreciated the hardscrabble agricultural reality of the Penghu islanders who had to contend with salty soil, and frequent droughts and famines. He and two other military officials funded the construction of Penghu's first shrine to the Dragon God, a water deity that locals could

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277 Lin Shumei, "Bo Taiwan ji," in *Xiaoyun shanren wenchao*, 107-112.

278 Ibid. As Shumei made his first journey to Taiwan, he noted the stereotypes of Taiwanese as easily provoked to bouts of violence as his father suppressed a local rebellion led by Xu Shang. According to the *Qing shilu,* Xu Shang was captured and taken to the prefectural seat of Taiwan for execution. *Da Qing Xuanzong cheng (Daoguang) huandi shilu*, Vol. 3 (Taipei: Taiwanhua shuwenju zongfaxing, 1964), 1446b.

supplicate for rain.[279] Other times, a naval officer like Tingfu might assist foreign envoys in distress. In 1827, a tribute ship from the Kingdom of Ryukyu encountered a storm and nearly wrecked in Tingfu's jurisdiction in Haicheng on the Fujian mainland. Tingfu sent soldiers over to protect the embassy until they were fit to return to Ryukyu. Ten years later, as Shumei was working in the staff of a magistrate in southern Taiwan, he would recall his father's assistance to the stricken embassy as he was also called upon to rescue an envoy from Ryukyu in danger of being killed by Taiwanese aborigines.[280]

While traveling and working with his father, Shumei also acquired a mariner's knowledge of sailing, naval geography, seaways, and tides. Both father and son used their specialized knowledge to contribute to the military and geographical literature dealing with Fujian's maritime frontier. When stationed in coastal garrisons in Taiwan and on mainland Fujian, Shumei and his father collaborated on mapping projects to document and make legible the strategic geography of Taiwan and Fujian, and delineate the essential seaways connecting the island to the mainland. Both father and son were highly influenced by the pioneering work of Xie Jinluan, the activist instructor, and Yang Tingli, the former prefect of Taiwan, and their efforts to incorporate and map Gemalan in northeastern Taiwan to keep it out of pirate control (See Chapter 3). Recognizing the close link between maritime security and accurate geographic understanding, Tingfu, serving as the Regional Vice Commander of Taiwan, made his own map of Gemalan's strategic geography to contribute to the complete compendia of Taiwan's geography, the *Quan Tai yutu* (The Complete Map of Taiwan). Four years later, stationed in Min'an, the maritime gate of Fuzhou, Tingfu dispatched his son to collect books on naval planning in preparation for a text to outline the strategic and defensive geography of the Fuzhou

279 Lin Hao, *Penghu tingzhi shisi juan* (Taipei: Taiyin jingyanshi, 2000), 440.
280 Lin Shumei, *Zeng Liuqiu Wei gongshi Youxiao*, in *Xiaoyun shanren wenchao*, 445-447.

area. Shumei sought out Xie Jinluan's son and asked for assistance from another local lineage to find surviving copies of Xie Jinluan's *Hazinan jilue*. In this text, Xie Jinluan argued for the creation of a new maritime sea route between Min'an and Gemalan in order to move personnel, material, and grain quickly between the capital of Fujian and the strategically vital and agriculturally rich new frontier—a position that Tingfu also came to advocate. Shumei recovered Xie Jinluan's text without its maps, but, combining them with the maps produced by his father for the *Quan Tai yitu*, reprinted the text as the "Brief Sketch of Min'an" (*Min'an jilue*).[281] Praised by his future teacher for its brevity and methodological approach, Shumei intended this text to supplement omissions in the prefectural gazetteer.[282]

As Lin Shumei traveled the sea-lanes with his father to far-flung coastal garrisons and as he developed skills as a military observer, sailor, and mapmaker, he also acquired a historical perspective on his home province as perceived from its coasts. As Shumei traveled to different locations along the Fujian and Taiwan littoral and lived in its garrisons, he read up on their local histories, visited their sites, and composed poetry on local themes. Through his inquiries into local history, he developed a particular affinity for the tombs and writings of loyalist martyrs who faced the collapse of their dynasty, namely those from the Southern Song and Southern Ming. As a young man of sixteen *sui* living in the Nan'ao garrison, Shumei sought out the tombs of Empress Yang and Lu Xiufu, who died as the Yuan forces closed in and the Southern Song boy emperor was drowned in the sea. Visiting their tombs and other sites associated with the end of the Southern Song regime in Nan'ao, Shumei recorded his impressions of their tragic and loyal deaths in poetry.[283] Lin Shumei's acquisition of local historical knowledge of Fujian's

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281 Lin Shumei, "Shu Xie Tuigu xiansheng Hazinan tu hou," *Jingyuanzhai wenchao*, 238-239.
282 Lin Shumei, "Min'an jilue zixu," *Xiaoyun shanren wenchao*, 98-99.
283 See Lin's poems, "Song Yang taihou ling," "Dizi lou, Lu Cheng Xiang mu," and "Ci Langzhou," in *Xiaoyun shanren wenchao*.

coastal regions was also an artifact of contacts he made sailing to different coastal locales. While residing in the garrison in Taiwan's Anping garrison 1824, Lin met Lu Jiulian, a fellow native of Jinmen, and a descendent of Lu Ruoteng (1600-1664), a Southern Ming martyr and who loyally served in rump Ming regimes in Fujian until his death. Lu Jiulian introduced Lin to his ancestor's writings by showing him an incomplete copy of one of his texts. Fascinated by the life and loyal example of Lu, Lin sought out surviving copies of Lu Ruoteng's written corpus from the collections of private individuals living across the coastal regions and edited them. As Lin continued to follow his father to various garrisons, he sought out physical artifacts associated with Lu. While his father was stationed in Penghu, Lin struck out to rediscover Lu's original gravesite somewhere at the base of Penghu's Taiwu Mountain, composing yet another poem to document his impressions.[284]

Lin Shumei's understanding of Fujian's history—bound up intimately with his experiences on the coasts and with his own affinity for exemplars of loyal martyrdom during the Southern Song and Ming periods—found a contemporary parallel with his fascination with members of Fujian's military elite. Born during the ravages of the pirate fleets of Cai Qian and Zhu Fen, he grew up among veterans of those sea wars, and who now comprised the middle and top leadership of the Qing navy, and with whom he and his father routinely socialized. Moreover, his island of Jinmen and the sister island of Xiamen were the home islands of the navy's top commanders during the pirate crisis, and were now celebrated as local heroes. The supreme commander of the Qing navy, Li Changgeng, was a native of Tong'an County, just across the water from Xiamen. Li's dogged pursuit of an aggressive sea war, political troubles with the

[284] Lin Shumei, "Ye Lu Muzhou xiansheng mu," "Penghu liubie," *Xiaoyun shanren wenchao*. It is unclear whether Lin was able to find Lu's original grave in Penghu. A descendant of Lu Ruoteng dreamed that he appeared in a dream and requested that his body be returned to Jinmen. The descendant, Lu Xuwu, sailed to Penghu, disinterred his ancestor's body, and buried him in Xianjuxiang in Jinmen. Lin Kunhuang, "Fenmu, *Jinmen zhi*, juan 2.

Manchu governor-general, and his death at the hands of the pirates earned him plaudits from activist scholar-officials like Ruan Yuan, Wang Qisun, and the eventual head of the Aofeng Academy, Chen Shouqi, whose eulogies extolling him would eventually find their way into Wei Yuan's *Da Qing jingshi wenbian*. Jinmen was home to Li's lieutenant, Qiu Lianggong, who would take over for Li as top commander after his martyrdom, and whose memorial arch to his mother dominated the landscape inside the Jinmen citadel. Veterans and military commanders featured prominently in Lin Shumei's biographical writings and would remain a central subject for him through the Opium War.

Within this naval world, Shumei's education was first practical: he learned how to sail and navigate, how to create maps and read topography for strategic purposes, and how to fight pirates and rebels. Yet, his peripatetic lifestyle did not confine him narrowly to the military. It also opened up opportunities to meet scholars across Fujian, make literary connections, and to acquire a deep interest in local history of the coastal regions. Although imbued with a wealth of practical military knowledge at an early age, he needed to ally himself with the elite literati world of northern Fujian to become a recognized "expert."

Collecting Educational Patrons, Guwen, and Scholarly Networks

After the death of Lin Tingfu at the age of fifty-nine *sui* in 1830, Shumei's days of traveling from naval garrison to naval garrison were over. No longer serving as his father's assistant, he was free to build his own career. Lin sensed an opportunity to put his wealth of military and local knowledge to use, but he first needed access to Fujian's elite educational networks and a literary pedigree that would attract the attention of people hoping to use his services. To that end, he conspicuously sought out official and literary patrons to provide him

with a social network and train him in *guwen*-style prose, the scholarly style fast becoming associated with activist scholar-officials. He also gained dual intellectual homes within the scholarly circles of Fuzhou and associates of the Aofeng Academy and in southern Fujian amongst the scholars of the newly revamped Yuping Academy in Xiamen, ensuring his place among Fujian's established and emerging literary networks. Lin's search for patrons and a social circle would enmesh him within a pan-Fujianese scholarly network and arm him with the literary technology of *guwen*-style prose. He would thus gain the notice of official employers as domestic and international turbulence loomed.

Before Lin could begin his literary transformation, he needed to take care of his dead father's estate and provide for his surviving family. He first accompanied his father's coffin from the Min'an garrison outside Fuzhou back home to Jinmen, and supervised the funeral and division of his father's property.[285] After attending to these matters, Lin began to consider his livelihood, and commenced to seek out patrons outside the military sphere who could pave his way into elite Fujianese circles. His previous travels with his father to different coastal locales did not restrict his social world to contacts within the Green Standard forces; on the contrary, his maritime journeys facilitated his social connections to educated elites in Taiwan, Penghu, and Fuzhou as he developed literary strengths and acquired a deep interest in Fujian's local history. His sojourning lifestyle even allowed him to begin learning *guwen*-style prose at the Xingwen Academy in Haitan while his father served in its garrison. While there, he initiated connections with the staff working on the revised Fujian provincial gazetteer in Fuzhou under Chen Shouqi, the head of the Aofeng Academy. These connections would prove useful as Lin south to

[285] Lin Shumei, "Xian kao Shoutang fujun xingshu," *Jingyuanzhai wenchao*, 500-509.

Reinvent himself as an expert in local affairs, comfortable in both the military and litrary spheres.

Lin Shumei found his most significant patron in the person of Zhou Kai (1779 – 1837), the circuit intendant of Quanzhou, Xinghua, and Yongding prefectures, a post whose yamen was situated in Xiamen. A native of Fuyang County in Zhejiang with extensive experience in official service and as an instructor in several academies, Zhou had acquired a reputation as a vigorous administrator and promoter of local public works and also manifested a strong preference for *guwen*-style prose. Importantly, his *guwen* intellectual pursuits earned him membership in the "Xuannan poetry circle" of activist officials and literati in Beijing, along with other prominent members like Lin Zexu, Wei Yuan, and Gong Zizhen.[286] He had a particular interest in promoting women's economic activities through sericulture, and his essays on that subject were later published in Wei Yuan's *Da Qing jingshi wenbian*.[287] Like many other officials who served in southern Fujian, Zhou was dismayed by what he described as the "degenerate" customs of this complex social milieu. He frequently trafficked in stereotypes in his writings about the Fujian locals, referring to the northern Fujianese as "stupid" and the southerners "incorrigible." Bemoaning the failure of the natives of the province to break out of their cycles of violence and disorder, Zhou blamed weak and corrupt leadership among local Qing officials—a stereotyped understanding in itself—but was resolved to bring a vigorous administrative approach to his post to smash smalltime pirates, assuage the ravages of famine, and reform customs through the cultivation of local talent.[288]

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286 Gong Jie, *Zhou Kai yu "Minnan jisheng"* (Beijing: Dianzigongye chubanshe, 2011), 1.

287 Zhou Kai, "Quanxiang min zhongsang shuo sanze,"*Qing jingshi wenbian*, ed. Wei Yuan (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1992), 918a-919b..

288 Zhou Kai, "Minsu lu xu," *Neizi songzhai wenji* in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, Vol 528, ed., bianzuan weiyuanhui (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2010), 217a.

In 1830, the exact year of Lin Shumei's father's death, Zhou arrived in his yamen in Xiamen as the famously rice-deficient region confronted drought and famine and the beginnings of a concomitant spike in petty piracy. Indeed, smalltime piracy in the waters around Fujian, communal conflict, and uprisings in Taiwan were an overriding concern for Qing officials throughout the 1830s. Cheng Zuluo, the governor-general of Zhejiang and Fujian from 1832 to 1836 and a native of Anhui, was himself preoccupied with unrest along the coasts. His memorials to the Daoguang Emperor routinely expressed concern about the construction of armed ships used by individuals to rob merchants and coastal communities, problems with smuggling, and the execution of prominent pirates in Fuzhou or Beijing. He was also deeply frustrated with the military, accusing them of being lax in capturing pirates or land-based bandits, and neglecting military training. In an attempt to assuage disappointment with the military, he punished military officials for perceived dereliction, reorganized garrisons and beefed up coastal defenses.[289]

Shen Ruhan, the prefect of Quanzhou and an admirer of the Ming philosopher, Wang Yangming, and another colleague of Zhou Kai, relished the opportunities granted by the pirates and local disorder in order to cast himself as an expert in military strategy. He published his ideas and experiences in two texts, the *Rongma fengtao ji* ("The tempest of the war horse") and *Wubei guyu lu* ("Record of defense preparation from the horse stable"). His writings including anecdotes that highlighted the difficulty in hunting down and capturing pirates who could easily shed their name and change their livelihood and location. In one of the prouder moments described in his collections, Shen pursued and apprehended the pirate, Zeng Wu, who had afflicted the coast for years, eluding capture by the Qing authorities. Tracking down the pirate's

[289] *Cheng Zuluo zhuan*, State History Office archives (*guoshi guan*): draft official biographies (*liezhuan*): Qing Palace Museum archives, Taipei.

mother and wife (Zeng was locally renowned for his filial piety towards his mother), Shen learned that he and his brother had been concealing their identities as papermakers in Dehua County. Armed with this information, Shen captured the pirate and his brother. After the pirate's wife and mother tearfully identified him, Cheng Zuluo, the governor-general, sent him to Beijing for execution.[290] Though quite evidently proud of his ability in pursuing criminals, Shen also regarded himself as a sensitive observer of the delicate economic and social balance between Taiwan and Fujian. He understood the central role Taiwanese rice and merchant shipping played in Quanzhou, from ensuring subsistence, to ameliorating piracy, to the grain's role as ballast in merchant ships. If Taiwanese rice was insufficiently stockpiled, or if the winds shifted and prevented the merchant ships from making their ocean crossings, it would be difficult for local people to sustain themselves during the winter, and Shen would have to deal with yet another wave of smalltime pirates. [291] For Qing territorial officials in Fujian like Cheng, Shen, and Zhou Kai, the relationship between rice supply and maritime security was a constant source of anxiety.

Zhou Kai, the circuit intendant charged with managing three prefectures from his office in Xiamen, the grain entrepôt of Fujian, took a similarly proactive approach to tackling pirates and safeguarding the rice supply. In 1834, the year after putting down a bloody uprising in Taiwan, Zhou accompanied the Qing naval forces to nearby Jinjiang County to smash pirate bands allegedly run by a powerful local lineage there dealing in opium. Following the anti-pirate campaign, he then returned to Xiamen to reconstruct the local granary whose stones had been carted away, leaving the land exposed to the salty spray from the sea. His efforts earned him plaudits from Cheng Zuluo as a capable and adaptable administrator for the maritime frontier.[292]

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290 Shen Ruhan, "Haidao Zeng Wu shimo," *Rongma fengtao ji* in *Qingdai bingshi dianjidang huilan*, Vol 31, ed. Mao Haijian (Beijing: Xueyuan chubanshe, 2005), 251-254.

291 Shen Ruhan, "Dao Quanzhoufu ren bingchen difang qingxing," *Rongma fengtao ji*, 361-366.

292 Zhou Kai, "Yungao xiansheng zizhuan nianpu," *Neizi songzhai wenji*, 73a.

Zhou took cues from his fellow officials, such as Cheng and Shen, to instigate a vigorous military approach to combating local piracy and securing sufficient rice stores. Despite his preoccupation with local military affairs, Zhou also had ambitions to renew the intellectual milieu of southern Fujian and attract and promote local literary talents in order to promote moral transformation of the region through education.

Indeed, a major component of Zhou Kai's administrative program was the reinvigoration of southern Fujianese intellectual life through the renewal of Xiamen's Yuping Academy, *guwen*-style education, the promotion of southern literary talents, and the publication of gazetteers for Xiamen and Jinmen. To that end, he sought out and attracted a following of scholars from Fujian's southern maritime region to come to Xiamen. Scholars from southern mainland Fujian, of Xiamen, Jinmen, and Penghu, including Lin Shumei, became Zhou's protégés and studied at the Yuping Academy. For Zhou Kai, inducting promising scholars into his retinue was often a function of managing routine affairs on the maritime frontier and contact with prominent local scholars, such as when overseeing famine relief. In 1831, Penghu suffered one of its frequent bouts of drought and famine, and Zhou sailed to the archipelago to disburse relief. While making a tour of inspection, Zhou met Cai Tinglan, a talented student who Lin Shumei had met earlier when his father was stationed in the Penghu garrison. At the meeting, Cai presented Zhou with a poem that described Penghu's hardship and outlined policy proposals for relief.[293] Impressed by the young scholar and his poem, and surprised that a place with "no schools" could produce such a talent, Zhou determined that Cai would make a valuable addition to his southern Fujian literary circle. It was Cai's experience and ability to speak to the issues affecting the Fujianese littoral as well as his literary talent that made him a compelling protégé

[293] Cai Tinglan, "Zhou xu," in *Hainan zazhu* < http://www.guoxue123.com/tw/01/042/003.htm> Accessed 3/20/17.

for Zhou. Lin Shumei with his military background, deep geographic and local historical knowledge, and literary talent was another; in Lin, Zhou found an acolyte that "could do *wen* as well as *wu*."[294] For Zhou, acquiring protégés like Lin and Cai was emblematic of his effort to promote the intellectual life of the littoral through a combination of *guwen*-style literary talent and practical troubleshooting.

Zhou centered his educational and literary projects on the Yuping Academy. One of two academies in Xiamen, it was built in the northeastern corner of Xiamen's walled city in 1752, and was constructed by an alliance of civil officials, military officers, and prominent gentry. It housed Xiamen's shrines to Zhu Xi and Wenchang, and its educational program emphasized Cheng-Zhu *lixue* learning. The academy received regular attention from officials posted to Xiamen over the next decades. In 1788 and 1813, its finances were updated and Zhu Xi's regulations for learning reemphasized.[295] Upon taking office in the 1830s, Zhou was initially inclined to construct a new school, but encountered resistance from the local gentry. The Yuping Academy directors, however, invited him to inspect and make needed repairs to their school. After touring the complex, Zhou was dissatisfied with the condition of the buildings, as well as the convoluted system for funding and implementing its repairs. He then embarked on an ambitious project to not only reconstruct the physical structures of the academy but also to expand the physical plant of the complex itself. Suspicious of the academy directors and annoyed at their inefficiencies, Zhou declared that each building must be funded separately. Moreover, he delegated the funding and reconstruction of the buildings to his entourage of literary protégés, so that one man managed the renovation and fundraising for a specific academy structure. Once

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294 Lin Shumei, "Shu Zhou Yungao fuzi yixiang hou," *Xiaoyun shanren wenchao*, 267-268.

295 Zhou Kai, "Chongxiu Yuping Shuyuan beiji," *Xiamen zhi,* juan 4 < http://www.guoxue123.com/tw/02/095/019.htm> Accessed 315/20.

constructed, Zhou's Yuping Academy attracted talented scholars from across Fujian's maritime region.[296]

In addition to updating the physical profile of the Yuping Academy, Zhou Kai also altered its intellectual tenor by emphasizing the instruction of *guwen*-style prose. The center of *guwen*-style prose learning was the Tongcheng school (Anhui), which heavily emphasized Song learning.[297] Those associated with the Tongcheng school considered *guwen* prose to be a free and unrestrained vehicle for "literati expression," especially when explaining political opinions.[298] Zhou himself was an enthusiastic supporter of *guwen*, but he learned not from an adherent of the Tongcheng school, but from Zhang Huiyan (1761-1802), a literary prodigy from Jiangsu. According to Benjamin Elman, Zhang Huiyan and his contemporary, Yun Jing, were emblematic of the Yanghu school of *guwen* prose in Changzhou. Although Zhang's intellectual sensibilities conformed to the Han learning trends (his classical learning was particularly focused on the *Zhouyi*), the Yanghu school of *guwen* prose was not itself narrowly oriented to Han learning. Because its members were primarily concerned with blunting the poisonous effects of Heshen in the Qianlong Emperor's administration, their intellectual orientations could include Han and Song Learning partisans, stimulating a "convergence of Changzhou statecraft traditions, literary currents, and New Text Studies."[299] Due to the Yanghu school's overriding concern with literary fellowship and political expression, the Han Learning proponents of the Yanghu school could

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296 Zhou Kai, "Chongxiu Yuping shuyuan beiji," *Neizi songzhai wenji*, 252b-253a.

297 Kai-wing Chow argues that the Tongcheng school was actually invented by Yao Nai (1731-1815) and other Anhui scholar-elites. Its emphasis on *lixue* and *guwen* constituted a reaction to the economically dominant Jiangnan region and its emphasis on evidential scholarship. Chow. "Discourse, Examination, and Local Elite: The Invention of the T'ung-ch'eng School in Ch'ing China," 206.

298 Benjamin Elman, *Classicism, Politics, and Kinship: The Ch'ang-chou School of New Text Confucianism in Late Imperial China* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1990), 295.

299 Elman, 297.

use *guwen* prose—itself a Tang and Song dynasty literary form—without too much shame.[300] Zhou Kai himself did not appear to manifest much interest in the literary debates over Song and Han learning. His writings do, however, demonstrate some criticism of Han Learning *kaoju* scholarship as being neglectful of practical affairs in favor of tackling obscure scholarly topics.[301] Indeed, practicality and vigorousness were key qualities in his approach to administrating the southern Fujian maritime world and virtues of local literary prodigies he surrounded himself with, like Lin Shumei.

As Zhou Kai unofficially presided over the revamped Yuping Academy, and lectured to his literary entourage, he had to consider a suitable academy head. For this job, Zhou looked to northern Fujianese intellectual circles, and particularly those with a formal or unofficial relationship to the Aofeng Academy and its intellectual traditions.[302] Zhou was eager to recruit Gao Shuran (1774-1841), widely considered to be Fujian's foremost talent in *guwen*-style prose. Gao's father, Gao Teng, attended the Aofeng Academy in Fuzhou where he was taught by Zhu Shixiu, the academy head.[303] A native of the northern Fujian county of Jianning, Zhu was dedicated to the study of *guwen*-style prose. He examined and evaluated examples of the literary genre from the late Zhou through the Ming before determining that the literary styles of Sima Qian and Han Yu comprised its central progenitors, while deriding the scholarship of the Tongcheng school as shallow and superficial. From the mid-Qianlong era, Zhu and his disciples dominated *guwen*-style prose in Fujian, and considered the prose form essential to rectifying

300 Elman, 294.

301 Zhou Kai, "Ming Kewen houxu," *Neizi songzhai wenji*, 219a.

302 Zhao Zaitian, a former official and Aofeng Academy graduate, also served as head of the Yuping Academy after Zhou's renovation and restructuring. Lin Shumei also acknowledged him as one of his teachers, writing a remembrance of him, and making the journey to Fuzhou after Zhao died. See, Lin Shumei, "Zheng shou xianshi Zhao Gushi xiansheng yiwen qi," in *Jingyuanzhai wenchao*, 534-535.

303 Sa Jiaju, *Gao Yunong nianpu yijuan* (Sa family manuscript, 1959).

one's body and mind.[304] Gao Teng would later go on to serve as an instructor (*xundao*) in Fujian, and taught Shuran, his son, to revere the former Aofeng Academy head and emulate his prose style. Though Gao Shuran did not attend the Aofeng Academy himself, he was closely associated with Aofeng Academy heads and students with whom he shared literary fellowship and pursued scholarly projects.[305] His mastery of *guwen*-style prose also allowed him to forge relationships with officials posted to Fujian who shared his literary sensibilities. Foremost among those extra-provincial relationships was with the activist scholar-official Yao Ying of the Beijing-based Spring Purification Circle (see chapter 3). With Yao Ying and Zhang Jiliang, the poet-prodigy and Aofeng Academy student who would go on to reshape activist literati circles in Beijing, and his Aofeng Academy connections, Gao was at the forefront of Fujian's scholarly scene.[306]

In 1835, Zhou Kai ordered Lin Shumei to invite Gao Shuran to teach at the revamped Yuping Academy in Xiamen. Ever since Lin Shumei studied *guwen*-style prose with Zhou Kai beginning in 1831, he began to split his time between Xiamen in the south and Fuzhou in the north, building connections with intellectual circles in both regions, and forged an especially close friendship with Zhang Jiliang. In 1835, Lin's connections with Fuzhou and Aofeng-based literati increased when Zhou ordered him to learn *guwen*-style prose from Gao Shuran. It was literary brotherhood at first sight. Gao had a firm belief in the relationship between study, thought, and action, and using *guwen*-style prose to rectify one's heart and mind, as well as use it to promote local Fujianese figures.[307] His favored literary topics also accorded with Lin's: they both shared a penchant for recording the biographies of vigorous Fujianese military figures and activist literati, such as the famed instructor, Xie Jinluan. A few years later during the Opium

304 You, *Aofeng shuyuan zhi*, 39.
305 Gao Shuran, "preface," *Yikuaixuan wenji* (Yangzhou: Jiangsu guangling guji keyinshe, 1998), 2.
306 Sa Jiaju, *Gao Yunong nianpu yijuan*.
307 Gao Shuran, "Da Chen Gongfu xiansheng shu," *Yikuaixuan wenji*, 591.

War, Gao's writings acquired new political urgency when he offered up a strategy to combat the British and eulogized local Fujianese who perished while resisting them. Gao was impressed with his new student's action-oriented exploits and desire to study without exhibiting interest in attaining examination success. He edited and provided commentary on Lin's writings, and adorned Lin's collected works with a preface.[308] Perhaps more important than instruction from Gao Shuran were the connections to activist literati in northern Fujian circles. While learning from Gao, Lin continued to solidify his relationships with northern Fujianese scholars, particularly Zhang Jiliang and Xie Xiaozhi, the son of the activist instructor, Xie Jinluan, with whom he discussed world affairs, and with other students attending the Aofeng Academy.[309] When Lin declined Zhou's invitation to teach at the Yuping Academy, it was initially a hard sell. Gao had been working with Chen Shouqi, the Aofeng Academy head, on the new Fujian Provincial Gazetteer as co-editor; when Chen died in 1834, Gao became the new chief editor.[310] Gao, however, changed his mind after being struck down by an illness, and Lin Shumei took it upon himself to watch over his care and recovery. Impressed with his new student's filial attitude, Gao agreed to teach at the Yuping Academy.

The arrival of Gao Shuran transformed the school into a southern literary powerhouse. Gao, Zhou Kai and his scholarly protégés formed something of literary salon, touring the scenic sites of Xiamen where they held banquets and poetry parties.[311] Members of this group also produced a collection of twelve paintings to celebrate the island's famous sites, as well as to commemorate Zhou Kai's exploits in managing the maritime frontier, from repairing the

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308 Lin Shumei, "preface" by Gao Shuran, *Xiaoyun shanren wenchao*, 4-7.
309 Zhang Jiliang, "Xie Xiaozhi xiongdi zhaoyin xijiang xiwu Lin da Xiaoyun yinyou cizuo," *Sibozitang shiwenji*, in *Qingdai shiwenji buibian*, Vol. 601 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2010), juan 22.
310 Sa Jiaju, *Gao Yunong nianpu yijuan*.
311 Zhou Kai, "Yuping shuyuan yeyan ji," *Neizisongzhai wenji*, 318a.

granaries to combating pirates in Fujian and rebels in Taiwan.[312] Zhou Kai and his Yuping Academy group also embarked on ambitious projects of local history with the first-time compilation of two gazetteers, the Xiamen gazetteer and the Jinmen gazetteer.[313] Previously, Xiamen had only a facsimile of a gazetteer, called the *Lujiang zhi* and published in the mid-Qianlong reign, but Zhou was dissatisfied with its emphasis on recording poetry and songs while omitting the island's history, geography customs, and biographies of prominent officials and residents.[314] Due to their centrality in the economic life and security of southern Fujian, it was increasingly recognized that Xiamen and Jinmen should have their own gazetteers—and, as Zhou mused, to serve at least serve as tools as governance for officials stationed in such a sensitive post. Perhaps inspired by Gao Shuran's work on the Fujian Provincial Gazetteer, Zhou, his Yuping Academy literary circle, and Lin Shumei compiled the Xiamen and Jinmen gazetteers. Lin, along with other Yuping Academy scholars, also began to scour Xiamen and Jinmen for writings carved into stele or other media to enhance the study of the islands' history and document its past events.[315]

Most importantly, the Yuping Academy group functioned as a literary support network for Zhou Kai's protégés who read, edited, commented upon, and wrote prefaces for each other's work. Zhou Kai and Gao Shuran added their own prefaces and commentaries to their students'

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312 This collection, called the *Minnan jisheng*, or "Record of triumph in southern Fujian," appears to honor Zhou Kai's administration.

313 Both Xiamen and Jinmen islands were attached to Tong'an county on the mainland. The publication of separate gazetteers for the islands should be understood as an acknowledgment of their economic and cultural clout, and separate identity from Tong'an county.

314 Zhou Kai, "Xiamen zhi xu," *Neizisongzhai wenji*, 204b-205a.

315 Similar projects to document local histories were occurring elsewhere at this time. Steven Miles documents students of the Xuehaitang in Guangzhou were undertaking similar projects to document the province's history in order to bolster their scholarly credentials to compete with those of established lineages in the hinterlands of Guangdong. See, Steven Miles, *The Sea of Learning: Mobility and Identity in Nineteenth-Century Guangzhou* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 127-163; In 19th century Yangzhou, Ruan Yuan corrected "false" historical narratives to celebrate local Yangzhou culture and its scholars. See, Tobie Meyer-Fong, *Building Culture in Early Qing Yangzhou* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003)..

works and raised their students' regional profiles by recommending them to other officials. One of these protégés, Cai Tinglan, the promising scholar from Penghu, had earlier impressed Zhou Kai by presenting his policy proposals for relieving a famine in poetic form. In 1835, when sailing home to Penghu after taking exams in the mainland, Cai's ship encountered a tempest. He was presumed dead, but miraculously reappeared in Xiamen a year later. After encountering the storm, his ship had floated for ten days before drifting to Vietnam where he befriended local officials and scholars who assisted him by arranging his travel home overland. With Zhou Kai's encouragement, Cai recorded and printed his experience in a collection that was part travelogue that examined Vietnam's geography, customs, and government, and in part a hagiography that elevated Cai as a "true"—Chinese and orthodox—scholar who impressed and overawed his "submissive" Vietnamese scholarly hosts. Zhou Kai used Cai's text and poetry to promote him to other officials stationed in Taiwan and used him as symbol of an emerging southern Fujian intellectual renaissance: a man from a "rough and poor" place like Penghu who impressed Vietnamese officials and was rising fast among literary circles.[316]

Like Cai Tinglan, Lin Shumei and his writings attracted the attention of Zhou and Gao. Under their tutelage, Lin was able to present the practical knowledge he had gained from his peripatetic youth in elegant *guwen*-style prose. His newfound *guwen* virtuosity symbolized his intellectual fellowship with a host of activist scholar-officials posted to Fujian and Taiwan and solidified his relationship with northern Fujian and Aofeng Academy literary circles. By being conversant in *guwen*-style prose, enmeshing himself in literary groups in northern and southern Fujian, and gaining patronage from academic celebrities like Zhou Kai and Gao Shuran, Lin

316 Cai Tinglan, "Zhou xu," *Hainan zazhu*.

strategically positioned himself as an in-demand maritime and defense expert just as the littoral entered a period of domestic and international turmoil.

The Creation of Lin the Maritime Expert

As Lin Shumei spent the 1830s seeking patronage from Zhou Kai, learning *guwen* from Gao Shuran, working on the Jinmen gazetteer with the Yuping Academy group, and traveling to Fuzhou to make connections with northern Fujian literary circles, he deliberately began to hone his reputation as an expert in managing local affairs. To that end, he sought out positions as an official secretary (*muyou*) in the employ of officials in Fujian tasked with resolving the troublesome issues of governing a complex and often violent place and organizing troops to defend Xiamen during the Opium War. Now armed with the ability to produce eloquent *guwen*-style prose, a literary technology that signified his fellowship in elite Fujian intellectual circles and beyond, and ensconced within a wide network of officials and activist Fujianese scholars from Xiamen in the south to the heart of the province's intellectual culture of Fuzhou in the north, he set out to not only assist his employers in handling practical affairs, but also to print and popularize his ideas for local organization, administrative improvement, and empowering the latent energies of locals and merchants to solve Fujian's problems.

In the fall of 1836, Lin again crossed the sea to Taiwan to serve as a *muyou* on the staff of Cao Jin, the newly appointed magistrate of the southern county of Fengshan. Cao Jin (1786-1849), a native of Henan, had earlier been transferred to Fengshan from Min County (Fuzhou). He was a newcomer to Taiwan and its complex social milieu, and so was eager to recruit local experts. This sense of urgency was heightened by a new round of social unrest rocking the island. That year a famine had hit Taiwan, which predictably led to another bout of "bandits"

attacking counties and officials.[317] Cao Jin needed a local expert to help him quell the disorder afflicting his county and prevent future violence. Lin's mentor Zhou Kai also was on his way to Taiwan, having been transferred to the sensitive post of Taiwan circuit intendant to coordinate the island-wide response to the violence.[318] With "pacification" of rebels a routine component of Qing administration in Taiwan, Cao Jin required staff that knew how to organize defense. With his military background and close connections to the ranking civil officials in Taiwan, Lin Shumei was an attractive acquisition for the magistrate.

After arriving in Fengshan, Lin surveyed the county and drew up a list of recommendations for Cao Jin to relieve its immediate problems and to plan for its long-term needs. For Lin, the most pressing was social relief and organization. To that end food should be disbursed to hard-up county residents, and grain collected in anticipation of future shortages. To facilitate robust social organization, he urged that the county be arranged into *baojia* units according to the precepts of Zhu Xi. For Lin, *baojia* was a boon for the state and people: it cut down on administrative fees and responsibilities, while leaving the residents in charge of controlling their own without having to deal with troublesome yamen runners and their abuses. Lin asserted that the county should seek out and arrest bandits and rebels, but appeared to even

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317 Lin Shumei, "Zai bo Taiwan ji," in *Xiaoyun shanren wenchao*, 107-112.

318 Three years earlier, Zhou had been the acting Taiwan intendant to suppress the Zhang Bing rebellion, yet another disturbance caused by drought and rice shortages. Zhou wrote a detailed, day-to-day account of the rebellion. He placed the Zhang Bing rebellion in a long line of rebellions in Taiwan, and identified drought and the availability of rice as the determining factor for these disturbances, and their effect on mainland's stability.[318] Like his efforts in the pirate-suppression campaigns, Zhou advocated a vigorous military response to quickly end the uprising. Working with Shen Ruhan, the self-styled military expert and Qing official, they spent about one hundred days quashing the rebels. It was a bloody affair, and the Qing officials were on edge with rumors of imminent surprise attacks, and plagued by the inability to distinguish rebels indistinguishable from non-combatants. Once a captured spy confessed that rebels, who could be identified by wearing colorful braids of cloth on their sleeves, had infiltrated one of the county seats, and planned to capture and kill the Qing officials there. Acting on this information, the Qing authorities commenced wide-scale suppression efforts; Zhou Kai himself sentenced eighty captured "rebels" to death by slicing. Lin Shumei heard Zhou Kai's account from his own lips and was keenly aware of the military exigencies facing Fengshan county. See, Zhou Kai, "Ji Taiwan Zhang Bing zhi luan," *Neizisongzhai wenji*, 287b-295a.

more concerned with the potential to abuse "innocents" when rooting out malefactors and the ease of falsely incriminating people as bandits.[319] In Lin's support for *baojia* organization and his apprehension over troubling innocent residents or falsely implicating them in crimes, he seems to have channeled the concerns and ideas of Zheng Jiancai, the activist instructor from Chapter 3, during the reconstruction after the pirate raids decades earlier. After the immediate problems facing Fengshan were addressed, Lin urged Cao to promote moral cultivation of Fengshan residents through the promotion of transformation through study (*jiaohua*) and through the repair of shrines for the loyal dead (officials and people) of the county who perished in previous unrest. Beyond that, the magistrate should strive to clear Fengshan's harbors and bays from physical obstruction to help promote people whose livelihoods depended on the sea, while clearing the area of haunts that would attract pirates. Lin ended with a recommendation to make peace between warring Cantonese and Fujianese villages.[320]

While drawing up his program, Lin also tackled Fengshan's pressing need for adequate defenses. In order to meet the county's immediate needs, he opted to organize the Fengshan residents into *tuanlian* units. As the son of naval officer, he had personal experience with military affairs, but linked his supposed expertise to self-study of ancient military classics, particularly Gu Yanwu and Qi Jiguang. Of these military texts, Lin identified the works of Qi Jiguang, the late Ming general who battled the Wakō in Fujian, as efficacious for local military defense organization, and considered his texts to be especially suited for warfare along the southeastern coasts and its particular topography.[321] Curiously, Lin's discussion of *tuanlian* never mentioned the influence of Yan Ruyi, the Hunanese scholar who used the works of Qi

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319 Lin Shumei, "Yu Cao Huaipu mingfu lun Fengshanxian shiyi shu," in *Xiaoyun shanren wenchao*, 19-38.
320 Ibid.
321 Lin Shumei, "Tuanlian xiangyong tushuo," in *Xiaoyun shanren wenchao*, 275-285. For an examination of Qi Jiguang and his creation of "peasant" military units and tactics see Chapter Six of Ray Huang's book, *1587: A Year of No Significance: The Ming Dynasty in Decline* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981): 156-188.

Jiguang and Gu Yanwu to devise *tuanlian* units to fight combatants during the White Lotus Rebellion. Yan's military success with the *tuanlian* units in the Hunanese highlands earned him a spot in the staff of Nayancheng, the governor-general of Guangdong and Guangxi, to combat the pirate menace of the early and mid-Jiaqing period, and even compelled him to write his philosophy of war on the Guangdong coast in his *Yangfang jiyao*.[322] Whether or not Lin encountered Yan Ruyi's texts, he approached *tuanlian* similarly in his proposal for county renewal which contained detailed guidelines that would transform Fengshan county residents into an effective fighting force, concentrating on recruitment of suitable candidates, harnessing their ambition, training and tactics, discipline, and deployment.

Cao Jin was impressed with Lin's proposal and approved it. While organizing local defenses, Lin, like his father, the naval officer, and his mentor, Zhou Kai, also took an offensive action and initiated "pacification" campaigns. Cao Jin twice sent Lin, a detachment of government troops, and local braves trained by Lin into the county's far reaches to purge the villages of leftover rebel remnants, pacify a new outbreak of communal strife between Fujianese and Cantonese villages, and to encourage the residents with moral suasion. Lin and the troops first entered the southern region of Longjiao, which was peopled by a complex array of Fujianese, Cantonese, and aborigines, who sometimes intermarried and sometimes fought each other, and who were widely understood to be one of the focal points for social upheaval within the

322 Daniel McMahon, "Qing Highland Precedent, Yan Ruyi, and the Defense of the Guangdong Coast, 1804-1805," *Asia Major*, Third Series, Vol. 23, No. 2 (2010): 1-32. According to McMahon, Yan's efforts to fight pirates in Guangdong did not initially achieve the success he enjoyed combatting rebels in Hunan. Though Nayancheng was eventually removed from his post, and Yan returned to the interior, officials in Guangdong continued to use his methods.

county.[323] Certainly these expeditions were punitive in nature, and served as a signal to intimidate the residents from future disorder. Yet, Lin also treated them as fact-finding missions to map out the county's southern topography, locate the position of Fujianese and Cantonese villages, and recorded the distribution of aboriginal settlements and their customs.[324]

His record and map, earning plaudits from his mentors, Zhou Kai and Gao Shuran, was designed to enhance the state's ability to project power over its unruly areas, and help consolidate its control. In a second expedition, Lin led troops on something of a civilizing mission to help jumpstart his social reorganization of the county. Journeying with the troops he trained to root out bandits in hiding in various Fengshan villages, he made yet another mapping expedition to positively locate the settlements, their routes, and distances between them. He then registered the village residents into *baojia* units and distributed copies of the *Xiaojing* (The Classic of Filial Piety) and the Song-dynasty text, *Xiangyue* (Community Compact), in the hope that these texts would help the residents cultivate the proper relationship and attitude between themselves and the civil authorities, and provide them with model for orthodox social organization.[325]

After Lin Shumei tackled Fengshan's pressing military matters, organized its locals into *tuanlian* groups, and embarked on a suppression campaign to the remote southern reaches of the county, he turned his attention toward reducing future outbreaks of violence. Like his mentor, Zhou Kai, Lin noted a causal relationship among Taiwan's frequent cycles of drought, increased rice prices, famine, and eruptions of banditry, communal strife, and rebellion. In this

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323 This area would later become known as the scene of the "Mudan Incident" in which 54 shipwrecked sailors from Ryukyu were killed by aborigines, leading to a brief Japanese invasion and the payment of an indemnity by the Qing to the Japanese government.

324 Lin Shumei, "Longjiao tuji," *Xiaoyun shanren wenchao*, 132-146.

325 Lin Shumei, "Qingzhuang jicheng," *Xiaoyun shanren wenchao*, 126-131.

understanding, it was economic factors that lay at the heart of Taiwan's pathology of violence. For Lin, the key to ending this violence was reducing the impact of droughts on local agriculture. To that end, creating effective waterworks that could blunt the impact of droughts would end the violence. Both Zhou Kai and his protégé believed that ensuring a stable environment for agriculture was the key to reducing violence, and both were eager to make improvements in water stability for Taiwanese cultivators. Zhou Kai favored teaching cultivators how to construct sturdy wells. Lin, however, argued that was both inefficient and ultimately ineffective. A well could only benefit a family, or, at best could only provide water for a small village; it could not provide sufficient water to irrigate crops nor protect them from the effects of drought.[326] What Taiwanese cultivators actually required, Lin argued, was a channel.

Lin proposal for such a big infrastructure project was initially met with skepticism by Cao Jin and the Taiwan prefect, Xiong Yiben.[327] That a viable channel could be constructed and funded from within the county appeared doubtful to the officials. To convince them, Lin drew up a plan, created a map of the proposed water routes, and regulations for its funding and maintenance. He proposed that the canal take advantage of the nearby river to acquire its water, and several sluicegates be constructed to maintain a stable and equitable water level to benefit various villages and to expel stagnant water. Lin used the Fengshan gazetteer and the county's natural topography to map out the water routes to help ensure maximum reach to the county's villages and proposed to make use of existing waterworks and streams to minimize costs. Officials, property owners, and local elders would take charge of the management and its construction by Fengshan locals and oversee its future maintenance to prevent the embankments from collapsing. It would be funded by regular fees from cultivators who drew water from the

326 Lin Shumei, "Shang Zhou Yungao fuzi lun Taiwan shuili shu," *Xiaoyun shanren wenchao*, 39-43.
327 Lu Dejia, "Fulu: Cai gong zhen ji," *Fengshan xian caifang ce* < www.guoxue123.com/tw/02/073/008.htm>Accessed 3/20/17.

canal to water their fields, according to water usage.[328] The project in the end was completed after two years of labor. Afterwards, a proud Lin Shumei wrote to Cao Jin about the accomplishment, and his vision for how the magistrate might capitalize on the channel project to promote other projects to benefit the county. He was sure that the channel would induce a massive surge in Fengshan's agricultural productivity, which would then have a transformative effect on the county's education and economy. He alleged that with the effects of drought reduced, county residents would repair their broken-down schools and spend more time studying, which in turn would lead to moral and spiritual transformation. The roads and bridges that were built as a necessary adjunct to the canal's construction would open up closer links to neighboring Taiwan County, enriching the area through closer and more efficient commercial interaction. He envisioned the economic productivity of the county's women improving once mulberry, cotton, and ramie were grown along the channel's banks, and their fibers woven into cloth. The cultivation of these plants would spur local industry, and spare the county the need to import such items from the mainland.[329] Lin anticipated that his channel would blunt future outbreaks of violence in Fengshan through the encouragement of economic production and the development of closer commercial links to the rest of Taiwan.[330]

Though Lin's efforts in Fengshan stemmed from a desire to enact policies that would strengthen Qing administration and control over the fractious county and benefit it economically, they were also part of a calculated effort to bolster his reputation as a local expert. Lin compiled his written work on his actions in Fengshan in *guwen*-style prose and presented it to Zhou Kai and Gao Shuran for editing and commentary. By transmitting his written texts to his patrons who

328 Lin Shumei, "Yu Cao Huaipu mingfu lun Fengshan shuili shu," in *Xiaoyun shanren wenchao*, 44-52.
329 Lin Shumei, "He Cao mingfu shuili gaocheng bingchen shanhou shiyi shu," in *Xiaoyun shanren wenchao*, 59-66.
330 Lin's relation of hydraulic works to economic production was strikingly similar to that of Chen Hongmou. Rowe, 222-228.

could recommend their protégé and testify to his abilities, Lin was able to acquire a name for being able to draw up effective (and stylish) proposals and put them into effect, particularly when it came to matters of defense and economic improvement. Beyond detailing his policies in Fengshan, he continued to hone his reputation through composing manuscripts addressing the strategic maritime geography of Taiwan, the tides, warships, and naval patrols. That he could package his writings in elegant *guwen*-style prose linking him to a literary brotherhood that included activist officials and literati made Lin an in-demand authority in maritime Fujianese affairs on the eve of the British attack.

The outbreak of the Opium War in 1839 solidified Lin as a maritime military expert. As British warships moved up the coast from Guangdong to Fujian to Dinghai off the coast of Zhejiang, Qing officials in Fujian desperately sought advice on how to handle the foreign threat. Lin found himself suddenly in demand as a maritime defense expert and traveled up and down Fujian to meet with Qing officials eager to formulate a response. In the summer of 1840, the governor-general of Fujian and Zhejiang invited Lin to meet with him to discuss the situation and hear his perspective. Similar to his actions in Fengshan county, Lin assessed the situation, and drew up a detailed plan in his cherished *guwen* style. Though initially self-deprecating, he insinuated that real talents who knew the maritime world were hard to find, slyly promoting himself. He was convinced that the real target of the British naval war was not Dinghai, which had recently fallen to their forces, but Xiamen and Tianjin. He devised a comprehensive plan to defend Fujian, but geographically, he emphasized the centrality of Xiamen and Taiwan to the overall scheme. Lin's plan was based upon his understanding of the effort to combat the huge pirate fleets of Cai Qian and Zhu Fen in the early and mid-Jiaqing period, as well as Fujian's experience under the Zheng regime in the mid-17th century and the Japanese *woko* raids of the

mid-Ming. For Lin, what appeared to be effective in blunting the impact of the corsair fleets on the coasts a few decades earlier could be applied in the fight with the British.

The central tenets of Lin's plan pertained to ensuring food security and the training of local braves. The stability of rice imports from Taiwan again emerged as a top concern for Lin. He urged the governor-general to resist the temptation to obtain rice from Jiangxi transported by soldiers or purchasing it from neighboring Zhejiang as had been done in the past. But this only made the rice moldy and caused the merchant to lose money in the venture. Instead, he encouraged the governor-general not to disrupt the merchant networks already in place that purchased and transported rice from Taiwan to the mainland, arguing that allowing the merchants to pursue profit was the most effective means to guarantee a steady and stable supply of rice to feed Fujian's population and to succor its soldiers. He also called for the training of local braves from among Fujian's villages to guard its many strategic points instead of relying on official Qing soldiers to do the job because locals were naturally vested in protecting areas near their homes.[331] In short, the crux of Lin's strategic message hinged on harnessing the latent energies of the Fujian maritime merchants and population to thwart the British, and to safeguard the Xiamen-Taiwan connection.

As the war progressed, Lin conferred with other Qing officials as they haplessly managed the province's defenses. He drew up separate plans for the defense of Xiamen and Jinmen for the circuit intendant, again emphasizing Fujian, not Zhejiang, as the real target of British aims, the need to ensure the island's food security, and the training of local braves to guard the islands.[332] With the circuit intendant and the new governor-general, he also devised battle plans, identified ambush points, located the placement of troops and cannon, explained how to discipline the

331 Lin Shumei, *Shang Min-Zhe zongdu Deng gong quan Min bei haice*, in *Xiaoyun shichao*.
332 Lin Shumei, *Shang XingQuanYong dao Liu gong Xia Jin er dao fangyu ce*, in *Xiaoyun shichao*.

troops and braves with rewards and punishments, argued for the use of spies, the repair of forts, the use of the historical example of the mid-Ming pirate campaigns, and the reading of translations of European works on firearms.[333] Lin often grew frustrated when he felt his policies were ignored by the Qing officials, and despaired when a British attack finally smashed artillery emplacements on Xiamen and drove Qing troops off the island.[334] For his part, Lin also took it upon himself to raise *tuanlian* units on Xiamen. He was joined by his old friend from the literary circles of Fuzhou, the poet-prodigy, Zhang Jiliang, whose zeal compelled him to take part in the defense of his home province while his mentor the eminent Tongcheng *guwen* wonder, Yao Ying, oversaw the Qing response in Taiwan as circuit intendant.[335] Together, Zhang and Lin raised a *tuanlian* unit and planned an ambush at the White Deer Grotto, a place where the Yuping Academy literary group frequently held nighttime banquets, yet never got a chance to battle with British troops before their unit was ordered to disband.

As Lin raised *tuanlian* units on Xiamen, he caught the eye of other Qing magistrates and circuit intendants on the Fujian mainland whose counties faced the sea and the possibility of British attack. They invited him to offer military advice on defense matters, including how to establish *tuanlian* units of their own. Though by this time, Lin had established himself as an expert in Fujian military affairs, it was his ability to write elegant *guwen* prose and association with northern Fujian literary circles that made him particularly attractive to counsel-seeking officials, credentials that indicated he was not some crank. Though Zhou Kai had died a few years earlier in 1837, the influential Gao Shuran was still recommending him to officials posted to Fujian, assuring them of his abilities in practical affairs and *guwen*-style prose. The magistrate

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333 Lin Shumei, *Shang zongdu Yan gong buchen zhanshou bace*, in *Xiaoyun shichao*.

334 Mao Haijian, *The Qing Empire and the Opium War: The Collapse of the Heavenly Dynasty* (Oxford: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 287.

335 Zhang Jiliang, "Xiaoyun yu sanyue wangri xie woren guanhai dun Bailudong huitu shuti shi jun feng dangshi pin lianxiang bing yuci," *Sibozitang shiwenji*, juan 29.

of Longxi county had initially heard of Lin and his reputation for military and administrative expertise during his work for Cao Jin in Fengshan county but received an introductory letter from Gao Shuran as well as an attachment of Lin's prose. Lin's practical talents were bolstered by his abilities to compose *guwen* prose in a tradition learned from Gao and Zhu Shixiu, the Aofeng Academy head that convinced the magistrate to raise *tuanlian* units to thwart the invaders.[336] Another circuit intendant concurred, citing the testaments of the magistrate and Gao Shuran to Lin's practical talents and *guwen* virtuosity.[337] Lin was becoming increasingly well-known for his facilities with military planning and *guwen* scholarly refinement; indeed, the one reinforced the other. Strong abilities in the prose form associated him with literary circles in northern Fujian who could recommend him to officials in need of advice, and link him intellectually, if not professionally to *guwen*-prose activist officials fighting the British, like Yao Ying and Lin Zexu.

The end of the Opium War in 1842 and the Qing surrender led a despondent Lin Shumei to use his *guwen* talents for the purpose of writing biographies and reminiscences for military officials (many of whom were friends and associates of his) and others who had perished in the war. He shuttled to and from Xiamen and Fuzhou, eulogizing the loyal dead and meeting with Fuzhou and Aofeng Academy friends (Zhang Jiliang had died in 1843). He also visited the tomb of the Southern Song martyr, Li Gang, which had become a pilgrimage site for activist Aofeng scholars, such as Zhang Jiliang, contemplating the events of the Fujianese hero's life and his own.

Over the 1840s Lin continued to split his time between taking care of his family in Xiamen and Jinmen and pursing literary projects with his friends and associates in Fuzhou. It

336 Lin Shumei, "Congjun jilue," in *Xiaoyun shanren wenchao*, 345-358.
337 Ibid.

was through the northern Fuzhou literary circles, and his reputation as a protégé and student of his friend Zhou Kai and the *guwen* master Gao Shuran, that Lin came to the attention of Lin Zexu, himself a product of the Aofeng Academy and Fuzhou literary circles. In early 1850, an ailing Lin Zexu returned to Fuzhou after serving as the governor-general of Yunnan and Guizhou to recuperate from an illness. There he met with Lin Shumei and queried him about the state of maritime affairs in Fujian, to which Lin provided him with another of his point-by-point policy prescriptions.[338] The elder Lin took a liking to Shumei, and the two men struck up a literary fellowship, presenting poems to the other.[339] As a sign of intimacy and respect, Lin Zexu presented Shumei with his own fox-fur coat, and composed a poem for Shumei's mother in honor of her birthday.[340]

Soon after, Lin Zexu was made the governor of Guangxi, and made preparations to head south. Lin Zexu then invited Shumei to be on his staff to help him handle pressing affairs in that province. Although Shumei styled himself as an expert in coastal defense, Lin Zexu likely thought that his military insight and experience in organizing *tuanlian* units would come in handy there: a mysterious group calling itself the God-Worshippers had started small-scale disturbances in Guangxi, and Lin Zexu had orders to quash it. Perhaps Lin Zexu thought that both he and Shumei could use their experiences in dealing with defense on the Fujian and Guangdong coasts and organize local defenses and help stamp out the malefactors. But it was not to be. The still sick Lin Zexu died on the journey south. A distraught Lin Shumei returned home, composing a lament to the dead governor. He died the following year at the age of 44 *sui*.

338 Lin Shumei, "Lin Shaomu xiansheng zhaofu shengcheng xun haishang shi jixi fucheng," in *Xiaoyun shichao*.
339 Zheng Lisheng, *Lin Zexu shiji* (Fuzhou: Haixia wenyi chubanshe, 1987), 610.
340 Ibid.

Conclusion

Zhou Kai's assessment of Lin Shumei—someone who could handle both *wen* and *wu*—was central to the creation of Lin the expert. Lin's story is fundamentally about political entrepreneurship and acquiring the essential credentials to become influential in Fujian. Although Lin was born into a naval family and had significant military expertise, won through first-hand experience and travel throughout the littoral, these credentials were not sufficient to elevate him to the status of an expert on local affairs. For his expertise to be truly credible to Qing officials, Lin needed proficiency in the literary technology of *guwen*-style prose which legitimized his membership in certain literati circles. With such membership also came important scholarly contacts among the graduates of Aofeng and influential northern Fujian circles connected to national scholarly networks that valued certain literary trends.

Lin's rise to prominence as an expert exemplifies the far-reaching impact of the Aofeng Academy in shaping education in Fujian, elevating literary trends, and mediating essential scholarly and official contacts. His case demonstrates that experts be made through capitalizing on association with Aofeng-approved literary forms and contacts. Aofeng's powerful legitimizing force birthed a cadre of local experts who provided Qing officials with guidance and extra-bureaucratic sources of information in order to assist with local administration in the early 19th century.

CONCLUSION

In the hot summer of 1853, Wei Tingfang escorted the coffin of his dear friend, Liu Jiamou (1814-1853) back across the sea from Taiwan to be buried at home in Fuzhou. Liu was a product of the Aofeng Academy, and like many generations of his fellow alumni, he served as a county instructor in Taiwan. Maintaining relationships with his fellow Aofeng alumni and a close friend of Lin Shumei, the self-made maritime expert, Liu was popular among his admirers for his advocacy on behalf of the residents of his county. He generally was regarded as a sympathetic observer of their daily life and culture. He combined his local advocacy and observations in a collection of poetry, "Sea sounds poems" (*Haiyin shi*), which were intended to be intoned in the local dialect, constituting a tribute to local Taiwanese daily life, sounds, and speech.

In early 1853, Liu continued at his post as instructor, but it was shaping up to be an ominous year. Southern Fujian was wracked by a sudden uprising from a mysterious group known as the Small Swords (*Xiaodao hui*), loose affiliates of another group menacing southeast China, the Taiping. While elite Fujianese and Aofeng graduates serving as county instructors in south Fujian rushed to smash the Small Swords, organized pirate fleets terrorized Taiwan. When the pirates raided Taiwan county, Liu, like other county instructors before him, manned the walls to repel the invaders. Yet, luck was not on his side. As he assumed the defenses, Liu died of disease. It was not to be the last tragedy to befall the dead instructor, however. Pirates boarded the ship carrying Liu's coffin, and threw his writings into the sea. As they were about to throw Liu's coffin overboard, Wei shouted, "I never expected Teacher Liu to leave like this!" (*mei*

xiangdao Liu laoshi jing de ci xiachang). When the pirates heard Wei invoke the name and profession of the deceased, they refrained from throwing Liu's corpse into the sea.[341]

Although this story as related by Wei Tingfang should not be taken at face value, there is something intriguing in the way the pirates showed deference to a deceased county instructor. Read as a parable, Wei appears to suggest that Liu's name and position carried with it some kind of authority that everyone would recognize. Could it be that lowly county instructors had the power to overawe even brigands?

By the time of Liu Jiamou's death, alumni of the Aofeng Academy had reoriented themselves to focus on local affairs for more than fifty years. Initially founded for the purpose of raising generations of *lixue*-enthusiast officials in tune with the philosophical orientation of the Qing court, the Aofeng Academy's commitment to *lixue* bestowed upon its alumni the value of practical action. In particular, the academy's lineage of enshrined Fujianese worthies from the Song to the Qing provided Aofeng students with compelling models of action and a legitimate political voice. The administrative decay in the late Qianlong period and concomitant maritime crises on the coasts convinced charismatic Aofeng heads to reorient their studies and energies to local interests and assist Qing officials in providing answers to urgent local problems on the Fujian and Taiwan coasts.

In keeping with a renewed localist orientation, Aofeng alumni frequently pursued careers as county instructors, positions that had a high degree of influence on the local level as the Qing state became increasingly distracted from various crises beginning in the early 19th century. Charged with county education and preparing students for the examinations, these lowly bureaucrats had the also leisure to pursue sideline projects in their counties. These projects were

[341] Liu Jiamou, *Haiyin shi*, ed., Taiwan yinhang jingji yanjiushi (Taipei: Taiwan yinhang jingji yanjiushi, 1958), 12.

of a practical nature intended to support and stabilize local society, such as improving waterworks or promoting agriculture. In times of turmoil, county instructors assumed leadership roles in organizing local defense. Not only did they take an active part in manning the county defenses and organizing local militia, but, like Chen Jincheng, they also developed military strategies to defend their home province from Western imperialists, and successfully lobby ranking officials to endorse their proposals. They also served as local advocates for the residents of their counties, and even took it upon themselves to act as local watchdogs to fight official corruption, even at the cost of severe punishment and banishment as in the cases of Lin Yuhua and Wu Yulin.

County instructors could also be highly ambitious and politically savvy. As we saw in Chapter 3, Xie Jinluan and Zheng Jiancai, two county instructors and Aofeng alumni, transformed the geography of the maritime frontier by championing the incorporation of Gemalan in order to keep pirates of out Taiwan. Xie and Zheng accomplished this feat by working closely with Qing officials, publishing and circulating a compelling treatise through the Aofeng Academy network, and using the national reach of the Aofeng Academy network to lobby in Beijing. They also protected their students from capricious magistrates and tackled Fujian's endemic problem of communal feuding. Finally, Xie even wrote a treatise on study and local governance, which achieved wide acclaim, and found a place in the libraries of many academies in the 19th century. For their achievements, the Aofeng Academy head enshrined Xie and Zheng as local worthies to serve as new models of local political action for new generations of Aofeng students.

Individuals who did not attend the Aofeng Academy could utilize the literary formats valued by the academy in order to establish careers as experts and official advisors. Lin Shumei,

born into a naval family on Jinmen, pursued mastery of *guwen*-style writing, a literary technology that allowed him to be taken seriously as an expert in military and maritime affairs. His success as a self-made expert and as a political entrepreneur was predicated on his virtuosity with literary forms made popular through Aofeng and he maintained relationships with many alumni. Eventually, he became an advisor to another Aofeng alumnus, Lin Zexu, who recruited him to fight against the Taipings.

By the middle of the 19th century, the academy activists' drive to tackle pressing local problems had been ongoing for more than sixty years. The celebrated "prosperous age" of the 18th century in Fujian and Taiwan, bookended by a protracted Qing conquest and the Qianlong emperor's tenth "perfect victory" over a rebellion in Taiwan in 1787, was considerably shorter than other parts of the empire. The maritime frontier and its vulnerabilities— its susceptibility to natural disasters and famine, its obstreperous social ecology, and exposure seaborne threats of pirates and imperialists—was a barometer of the empire's health, and even before the dawn of the 19th century, the state was failing it. What's more, the academy activists knew it. In the absence of efficacious state action, the academy activists' attempts to address issues afflicting the maritime frontier instigated a localist orientation that (usually) worked in cooperation with the state, but as the decades wore on, the state appeared increasingly irrelevant. At the same time, the state's role was beginning to shrink in other regions where local gentry assumed managerial roles, elites raised private militias, and people celebrated local culture. The great mid-century rebellions that finally tipped the balance of power between state and local society and swept away both the Qing dynasty and the imperial system in 1911 may have had its antecedents with the academy activists laboring on the maritime frontier in the early 19th century. After all, for instructors working in far-flung coastal counties, the pirates were close but the emperor was far

away. As Liu Jiamou mounted the county walls and observed the pirates arrayed below him, he might have wondered if the Qing was still needed.

Glossary

aizhuan ci 愛專祠
Anping 安平
Anxi xian 安溪縣
Aofeng shuyuan 鰲峰書院
Aofeng shuyuan ji 鰲峰書院紀

Bailudong shuyuan guize 白鹿洞書院規則
Bao Shichen 包世臣
baojia 保甲

Cai Bi 蔡璧
Cai Jing 蔡京
Cai Qian 蔡牽
Cai Shiyuan 蔡世遠
Cai Tinglan 蔡廷蘭
Cha Siting 查嗣瑮
Chaozhou 潮州
Chen Genghuan 陳庚煥
Chen Hongmou 陳宏謀
Chen Huacheng 陳化成
Chen Jingcheng 陳金城
Chen Shouqi 陳壽祺
Chen Zhouquan 陳周全
Cheng Hao 程顥
Cheng Yi 程頤
Cheng Zuluo 程祖洛
Chiling 赤嶺
Cao Jin 曹謹

Da Qing jingshi wenbian 大清經世文編
Daoguang 道光
Daonan yuanwei 道南淵源
Dehua xian 德化縣
Dinghai 定海
Donglin 東林

Fang Bao 方苞
feifu 匪婦
Fengshan xian 鳳山縣
Fujian 福建

Fujian quanzheng zhengsu shi 福建風整俗使
Fukang'an 福康安
Fuzhou 福州

Gao Shuran 高澍然
Gemalan 噶瑪蘭
Geng Jingzhong 耿精忠
gewu 格物
gongsheng 貢生
Gu Donggao 顧棟高
Gu Yanwu 顧炎武
Guanfeng zhengsu shi 觀風整俗使
guanke 官課
Guanxue 關學
Gui Youguang 歸有光
Guo Shangxian 郭向先
guwen 古文

Haifang jiyao 海防紀要
Hazinan 蛤仔難
Hazinan jilue 蛤仔難紀略
Heshen 和珅
Hong Liangji 洪亮吉
Houguan xian 候官縣
Hu Anguo 胡安國
Hu Juren 胡居仁
Hu Wei 胡渭
Huang Daozhou 黃道周
Huang Zongxi 黃宗羲
Huangchao jingshi wenbian 皇朝經世文編
Hushi chunqiu zhuan 胡氏春秋傳

jiaohua 教化
jiaoyu 教諭
Jiaoyu yu 教諭語
jiaozhi 教職
Jiaqing 嘉慶
Jiayi xian 嘉義縣
Jieyi ci 節義祠
jingshi 經世
Jinmen 金門

jinshi 進士
jungong chang 軍工廠
juren 舉人

Kangxi 康熙
kaoju 考據
kaozheng 考證

Lan Dingyuan 藍鼎元
Lei Hong 雷鋐
li (profit) 利
Li Changgeng 李長庚
Li Gang 李綱
Li Gengyun 李賡芸
Li Guangdi 李光地
Liang Shangguo 梁上國
Liang Zhangju 梁章鉅
liangmin 良民
Lin Guangtian 林光天
Lin Hei 林黑
Lin Shumei 林樹梅
Lin Shuangwen 林爽文
Lin Tingfu 林廷福
Lin Yuhua 林雨化
Lin Zexu 林則徐
Liu Jiamou 劉家謀
lixue 理學
Longxi xian 龍溪縣
Lu Longqi 陸隴其
Lu Ruoteng 盧若騰
Lu Shiyi 陸世儀
Lü Liuliang 呂留良
Lü Zuqian 呂祖謙
lüyingbing 綠營兵

Meng Chaoran 孟超然
Min'an 閩安
Min'an jilue 閩安紀略
minghuan ci 名宦祠
Mingshi 明史
mingti dayong 明體大用

Minxue 閩學
muyou 幕友

Nayancheng 那彥成
Nian Gengyao 年羹堯

Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修

Penghu 澎湖
Putian xian 莆田縣

Qi Jiguang 戚繼光
Qianlong 乾隆
qimin 耆民
Quan Tai yutu 全臺輿圖
Quanzhou 泉州

Ren Qiyun 任啓運
Rongma fengtao ji 戎馬風濤集
rongguan 冗官
Ruan Yuan 阮元
ruxing 儒行
ruxue 儒學

shanzhang 山長
Shen Ruhan 沈汝瀚
shengshi 盛世
Shi Lang 施琅
shixue 實學
Siku quanshu 四庫全書
Sima Guang 司馬光
Songshi 宋史
songshi 訟師
Sun Erzhun 孫爾準
Sun Qifeng 孫奇逢

Taiwan 台灣
Taiwan fu 台灣府
Taixue 太學
ting 廳

Tongcheng 桐城
tongsheng 童生
Tongzhi 同治
tuanlian 團練

Wang Anshi 王安石
Wang Fuzhi 王夫之
Wang Shaolan 王紹蘭
Wang Tingzhen 汪廷珍
Wang Yangming 王陽明
Wang Zhiyi 王志伊
Wei Tingfang 韋廷芳
Wei Yuan 魏源
Wenchang 文昌
wenmiao 文廟
wokou 倭寇
Wu Deng 吳澄
Wu Sha 吳沙
Wu Yulin 吳玉麟
Wubei guyu lu 武備固圉錄
wusheng 武生

Xiamen 廈門
xiancao 閒曹
Xianfeng 咸豐
xiangxian ci 鄉賢祠
Xiangyue 鄉約
Xiaojing 孝經
Xie Jinluan 謝金鑾
xiedou 械鬥
Xin Congyi 辛從益
Xinfa 新法
Xingli jingyi 性理精義
Xiong Cilu 熊賜履
xuezheng 學政
Xuezheng quanshu 學政全書
xundao 訓導

yanlu 言路
Yan Ruyi 嚴如熤
Yang Shi 楊時

Yang Tingli 楊廷理
Yao Nai 姚鼐
Yao Ying 姚瑩
Yaoyang 堯陽
yi (righteousness) 義
yidai wanren 一代萬人
yixue 義學
Yongzheng 雍正
You Guangyi 游光繹
You Zuo 游酢
Yuping shuyuan 玉屏書院

Zeng Jing 曾靜
zhaoshi 招試
Zhang Boxing 張伯行
Zhang Huiyan 張惠言
Zhang Jiliang 張際亮
Zhang Lüxiang 張履祥
Zhang Shicheng 張師誠
Zhang Zai 張載
Zhangpu xian 漳浦縣
Zhangzhou 漳州
Zhao Shenzhen 趙慎畛
zhaozhong ci 召忠祠
Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功
Zheng Guangce 鄭光策
Zheng Jiancai 鄭兼才
Zheng Jing 鄭經
Zheng Zhilong 鄭芝龍
zhenshuaihui 真率會
Zhong Renjie 鐘人杰
zhongxiao ci 忠孝祠
zhongyi xiaoti ci 忠義孝悌祠
Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤
Zhou Kai 周凱
Zhouli 周禮
Zhouyi 周易
zongzu 宗族
Zhu Shixiu 朱仕琇
Zhu Xi 朱熹
Zhu Yigui 朱一貴

Zhu Yihai 朱以海
Zhu Yujian 朱聿鍵
Zhuzi bailudong jiaotiao 朱子白鹿洞教條
Zhuzi quanshu 朱子全書

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